



Page 9 Building a social brand

A German believes bags made out of truck tarps are what's needed by the Chinese fashion market.



Pages 12-13 Famous not always best

Art critics meet to assess the real value of contemporary works free of the trappings of famous names.

Spring is yet to come



Despite the promises of officials, copyright protection remains elusive in China: just as Wang Feng.

When Wang turned a blind eye to two singers who made it big with his song "In the Spring," he never expected he was handing them the easy career he never had.

Since the Spring Festival Gala, the duo has risen to riches performing Wang's for commercial crowds.

Now Wang is finally prepared to cry foul.

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Health authorities to investigate reproductive services

By Li Zhixin

The Municipal Health Inspection Institute said Monday that health authorities will begin a nine-day examination of institutions engaging in human-assisted reproductive services on February 20.

Due to numerous bad reports, health authorities are planning to overhaul the industry and pass a series of regulations to standardize operations and strengthen oversight of the semen collection and utilization process.

Authorities called on couples to find out information about sperm donors before seeking artificial insemination.

There are nine medical institutions allowed to provide artificial insemination services in the city: National Reproductive Health Service Center, Beijing Chaoyang Hospital, Beijing Union Hospital, Beijing Obstetrics and Gynecology Hospital, Peking University First Hospital, Peking University People's Hospital, Peking University



Illegal semen collection and utilization is increasingly common in Beijing. IC Photo

Third Hospital, Beijing Haidian Maternal and Child Care Service Center, and Beijing Jiaen Hospital.

Lu Guangxiu, a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference who has been advocating regulation of artificial insemina-

tion, said human-assisted reproductive technologies have grown too commercial in recent years.

"The consequences of technology abuse are quickly becoming apparent. The use of test tube babies to eliminate unwanted females has been obvious, and there have been

numerous cases of abusing the process to birth multiple children at once," she said.

The Ministry of Health banned the implantation of test-tube babies into surrogate mothers in 2001, but abuse of the technology continues. Some surrogacy agencies and private hospitals still provide the service behind closed doors.

As of 2009, 10 surrogate agencies remain popular on the Internet. "Inspection systems are very strict at regular hospitals, so surrogacy agencies usually implant test-tube babies at private hospitals with which they have some connection," said Lin Qing, an employee of one surrogacy agency.

Due to the high profits to be had, some medical institutions without mature invitro fertilization skills have also been operating in the field. "These companies can put surrogate mothers at great risk. When something goes wrong, no one is there to protect the mother's rights," she said.

Nation places 4th in international patent filings

By Chu Meng

The country's international patent filings under World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) grew more than 56 percent in 2010, the world's highest, the Geneva-based organization said at a press conference on Monday.

"The growth rate from China was astonishing," said WIPO Director-General Francis Gurry.

In 2010, China filed 12,337 patents under the PCT system, 7,900 more patents than the previous year, overtaking South Korea as the 4th ranked PCT filing country.

"The increase has shown China's progress in innovation. However, considering the total population base, the absolute number of total filings remains weak when compared to the US and Japan," said Xu Fengxian, an economist at the Institute of Finance and Trade under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

Companies and institutions from the US filed 44,855 applications in 2010, down 1.7 percent from 2009. Japan filed 32,156 applications, a 7.9 percent increase.

Asia was the most dynamic region in patent filings, Xu said.

"However, the population bases of Japan and Korea are far smaller than ours, which means if we consider per capita patent volume, China remains vulnerable," Xu said.

Among companies, Panasonic has kept its top spot in 2010, having filed a total of 2,154 patent applications worldwide last year. Two Chinese companies, ZTE Corporation and Huawei Technologies, were ranked among the Top 10 applicants under the PCT system.

With 1,863 patent filings, ZTE took 2nd place on the chart, rocketing from 20th place in 2009, while Huawei ranked 4th, down two places compared to the previous year.

Chinese companies have long been criticized for intellectual piracy. ZTE and Huawei are being seen as image leaders.

The number of PCT patent applications is an authoritative measure of a company's international innovation ability and competitiveness as well as an important tool for technology companies to participate in international competition and develop international markets.

Still, none of the country's universities have made it into the list of the Top 50 university patent filers, a list still dominated by 30 US schools.

"Secondary education institutes play a role in dynamic innovation because they are where the most young and brilliant minds are gathered. China's failure to place shows the huge gap between Chinese universities and world leaders, and further exposes the weakness of China's academic power," Xu said.

City's galleries to be free by 2012



Art museums are often accused of catering to elite academics and professionals rather than the general public. CFP Photo

By Han Manman

Public galleries in Beijing are preparing to open their doors for free following a joint resolution by the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Finance.

By the end of this year, all public galleries at the state and provincial levels will be free to everyone. By the end of 2012, all other public art galleries will follow suit, according to the resolution.

Most public art museums currently charge between 5 and 30 yuan per person.

The move comes after the nation began offering free access

to its museums and memorial halls in 2008.

The ministry called on city-level finance departments to make up for the lost revenue by "investing more in art galleries and libraries so they can operate without charging, while enabling them to improve basic public cultural services."

The ministries said they will also allocate new funds to subsidize the construction and operation of art galleries and libraries in less developed central and western regions.

They encouraged art museums

and libraries to improve services for children, rural migrant workers, the disabled and the elderly.

"This is definitely good news for art lovers and culture fans in China," said Fan Di'an, dean of the National Art Museum.

Fan said art museums, libraries and other public institutions have long been accused of catering to elite academics and professionals rather than the general public.

He said the new policy shows that art museums are catching up to their Western counterparts.

While many lauded the new policy, some expressed worries.

"Some pieces must be kept in a controlled environment with a stable temperature and humidity. The influx of more visitors in museums will certainly compromise these protection measures," said Wu Hongliang, president of Art Museum of Beijing Fine Art Academy.

"We need to improve museum facilities to accommodate more visitors," he said.

Wu said the museums should consider a public awareness campaign so people can understand how art must be protected so future generations can enjoy it.

Row reveals tour industry woes

By Liang Meilan

Three tourists from Liaoning suspected of beating a tour guide in Macau found themselves trapped inside their bus with 26 other passengers when more than 100 other guides surrounded the bus on Monday.

The dispute continued for five hours until representatives from the local Tourism Administration and the police became involved.

The Liaoning tour group reportedly became angry and verbally abused its female tour guide for arriving late. A local guide

surnamed Yu attempted to mediate and was reportedly attacked by three of the tourists, receiving blows to his head, waist and legs.

At 8 pm, the bus was surrounded by guides who demanded an apology. Family members of the wounded guide came to demand that the men pay 200,000 Macau pataca (164,000 yuan) as compensation.

Police detained the three men soon after arriving at the scene.

The Macau Tourism Administrative said that the wounded guide had the right to pursue compensa-

tion through civil legal action.

The incident came days after a fight in Hong Kong involving a tour guide who reportedly pressured Chinese travelers to buy souvenirs from a jewelry store earlier this month.

Industry insiders said both incidents were caused by a practice called "zero-fare group tours," on which tour guides prepay all fees and attempt to recoup them by encouraging the tourists to buy as many goods as possible.

"The common practice trans-

fers the risk of losing money to tour guides who have no choice but to push their groups as hard as possible," said Sun Lichan, a marketer at Huayuan International Tour Agency.

"The angry sentiments of the three tourists in the incident might have been caused by frequent shopping stops during their trip to Hong Kong before arriving in Macau. On most one-day tours of Macau, tourists are asked to shop in at least three stores," she said.

But such low-cost group tours

are popular in China. The five-day tour of Hong Kong and Macau priced at 998 yuan has attracted many travelers from northern China.

"This is also causing cutthroat competition among tour agencies. Generally, low prices should be a sign of low quality. They betray a trip with poor accommodations, bad food and wasted time," she said.

"In other countries, tour packages usually cost more because they come with quality service," she said.

Singles push blind dating into mainstream

By Han Manman

The latest survey of Chinese attitudes toward love and marriage provides some factual basis for long-held stereotypes of singles.

The responses from 21,000 men and women between the ages of 23 and 35 showed that people in Beijing and Shanghai really do demand a car and a house, whereas those in Heilongjiang consider family background paramount. Shandong obsesses over filial piety, and in Zhejiang the women want only one thing: money.

The 2010 China Marriage and Relationship Survey Report said that more than 260 million people in the country are looking for love: 80 million of them are concerned parents.

But perhaps the most useful news to come out of the survey, designed and conducted by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the dating website Jiayuan.com, is that a significant number of young people believe blind dates are the best way to find a mate.

As many as 77 percent of single men and women said they preferred blind dates because their

social circles were too limited. More than 90 percent said they watched dating shows on TV.

Despite the cold weather, parks across the country became hot matchmaking spots as singles flocked to find their life mates during Spring Festival.

"It was not romantic at all," said Li Jing, 30. The Ditan Park matchmaking event attracted some 50,000 eager singles to sift through the personal information of other singles. Fliers enumerated the single's salary and housing demands.

Men and women taking part in the event, mainly office workers in their late 20s and early 30s, flirted and exchanged phone numbers.

While the event may have been a networking time-saver, Li said it was a romance-killer. She recalled one flier that demanded prospective mates be Beijing locals with a monthly salary of more than 5,000 yuan. Non-residents were expected to earn at least 10,000 yuan.

"People came here looking for marriage, not love," she said.

Online matching sites have seen a similar boom.

By January, the registered



Most single men and women say they prefer blind dates to expand their social circles.

CFP Photo

members of three major mainland dating websites totaled 85 million, almost half the number of unmarried men and women in the country.

About 3 million singles paid to search for potential mates online in 2010 alone, according to Tian Fanjiang, CEO of Baihe, a dating website.

"Compared to 2009, our operating income increased tenfold in the first quarter of 2010," Tian said. In 2010, Baihe took in more

than 6 million new members and achieved online revenue of 100 million yuan, up 100 percent.

"We are still in the beginning stages," said Tian, adding that he expects his company to certainly see a higher growth rate this year.

The survey also found the traditional concept for marriage has changed.

It said people are more tolerant of cross-cultural and homosexual relationships. Some 70

percent would date a foreigner and 63 percent said homosexual relationships were normal.

Also contrary to traditional expectations that a man should buy house when he gets married, more and more Chinese men hope to marry a woman who already has a house.

The study also showed that it will be more difficult for men to find partners in the future, as the gender ratio has grown to 118 men to every 100 women.

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Occupational disease the nation's neglected chronic killer

By Zhang Dongya

Zhang Haichao underwent open-chest surgery to prove the existence of his black lung disease last year, forever cementing his name with the ailment.

Since his brave effort, many people have come to know the hazardous state of occupational safety in the country.

In 2011, prevention and treatment of occupational diseases will be one of the main tasks for the government, in addition to resolving food and water safety problems, said Chen Zhu, Minister of Health, last week.

"Independent institutions to prevent and treat occupational diseases, ones separate from comprehensive hospitals, are very important. They can help to diagnose diseases, identify warning signs and aid in prevention," said Zou Wei, editor of Zynw.com, the country's only website specializing in occupational safety.



Coal miners and construction workers are at great risk of developing black lung disease, the most common occupational disease in the country.

Explosion in illness

Zou Wei, 27, joined Zynw.com, the Occupational Disease Network, in 2009.

Based in Chongqing, the website was founded by a local small-and-medium-sized enterprise service platform in 2007 to provide support to people suffering from occupational diseases. Today it is the country's nexus for information related to working hazards.

Its small group of five editors has won attention from people across the nation who struggle with occupational diseases. Its information and positive attitude has helped many to obtain compensation and protect their rights.

In 2009, 124 migrant workers in Gulang County in Wuwei, Gansu Province were diagnosed with black lung disease. A third of them are in critical condition and three are already dead.

In late 2009, the 28-year-old migrant worker Zhang Haichao from Henan Province elected to undergo open-chest surgery to prove the existence of the disease to justify his compensation. Today, Gulang has been synonymous with the disease.

Black lung disease, formally known as pneumoconiosis, afflicts coal miners and construction workers who breathe

in industrial dust. It is currently one of the most common occupational diseases in the country, with 14,495 people reported to be suffering from it in 2009, according to the Ministry of Health.

Since Zhang's dramatic effort, many new cases have been reported. "We received many questions from patients about how they can protect their rights and receive compensation," Zou said.

Occupational diseases are on the rise. Statistics show that there was a more than 32 percent increase in diagnoses of occupational diseases in 2009.

A backward system

But many people still misunderstand the nature of occupational diseases, Zou said.

Many mistake common office ailments such as pain in the neck or lower back as an occupational disease. "A real occupational disease is a chronic ailment that occurs as a result of work or occupational activity. Black lung, chemical and metal poisoning and radiation poisoning are the most common," Zou said.

"Learning what occupational diseases are is only the first step to helping the real sufferers resolve their problems," he said.

However, backward regula-

tors stand in the way.

There are only 12 independent provincial-level institutions for the prevention and treatment of occupational diseases in the country.

Chen Xiaohong, the vice minister, urged all provinces to set up independent institutions for occupational diseases as soon as possible in 2011 at a working conference last week. All cities will be required to set up institutions that can diagnose occupational diseases before the end of the year.

"Prevention and cure is just beginning in China, and there is a long way to go before it can support the current need," Zou said.

He said Jiangsu and Guangdong provinces, as well as Shanghai, are comparatively prepared. Guangdong and Jiangsu are the country's manufacturing powerhouses.

But it is not the workers in the southern boom towns who are most at risk: the small workshops scattered throughout the countryside may hide the greatest dangers.

Regulations need urgent update

The current law on occupational disease prevention was passed in 2001. In the decade since, it has proved to be a useless mess of loopholes.

The unusually lengthy procedures required for diagnosis cause many patients to miss the opportunity to collect compensation from their employers.

According to the regulations, patients must be diagnosed as having an occupational disease at a hospital – a three-month process. Afterward, they must get the local labor administration to identify the disease was caused by their current working environment – a two-month process. Then they must wait for two to



All provinces are being urged to set up independent institutes to prevent and treat occupational diseases. The current backward system is expected to reform this year.

CFP Photos

three months while their disability level is rated.

"If everything goes smoothly, it will take nine months. Many small factories change their businesses in far less time than that, especially when they hear whispers of their workers getting sick," he said.

"Many of these diseases also have long incubation periods, and many workers only learn of their illness years after they have lost track of their employer," he said.

Last year, the website tried to help a patient with benzene poisoning in Bishan, a small county in Chongqing, to win compensation for his treatment. The procedures went on for a year, and when the patient finally had all the papers he needed, his boss vanished.

"It is very frustrating, but all we can do is watch his condition worsen. We have tried everything, but in the end it was useless. We tried to raise money on our own, but that didn't work very well either," he said.

"Shortening the identification period is vital to helping these patients get compensation, and it was proposed at the two parliamentary sessions in

2010," he said.

Zou said the government took several steps to shorten the time last year, approving diagnostic criteria for occupational diseases related to infection and radiation.

The Ministry of Health, the Administration of Work Safety and the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security also agreed to take responsibility to handle diagnosis and treatment, as well as paying for the social security of patients with occupational diseases.

Zynw.com is attempting to call for the creation of an Occupational Disease Day to enhance awareness of the risks faced by workers around the country. They have suggested several days for the observance, including October 27, the day the first relevant legislation was passed.

A migrant worker at a Shanghai start-up suggested June 22, in memory of the anniversary of Zhang's open-chest surgery.

"Occupational disease is a largely ignored aspect of public health and safety in our country, and that ignorance is helping hide a lot of danger. It is still a chronic killer that society chooses to ignore," Zou said.



Patients from Gansu Province who have black lung disease seek attention on the streets of Xi'an, Shaanxi Province.

Eaten by the dragon

Will China buy the world as it overtakes Japan?

What does it feel like to be bought by a Chinese company? A recent article in *The Economist* shows the growing concern the world has about China's increasing influence and power. But a Chinese veteran in international public relations said the nation has no desire to be a hegemonic power.

China hurdled past Japan last year to become the second largest economy in the world – and experts predict the country will surpass the US at the top in just a decade and a half.

Brush up on your Chinese, world media said.

An article in the November 11 edition of *The Economist* warns of China's growing power. The article begins with a dramatized story of an American company being bought by a Chinese state-owned company.

It moves on to describe how much influence China has gained in the past decade. Currently, Chinese state-owned companies account for more than a tenth of global stock market values.

China's Central Bank is acting like a portfolio investor grabbing bonds, and that could lead to nasty debts for the First World.

The article expressed concern that China would then purchase the world's raw materials, land and resources, as well as increasing access to global markets.

(Agencies)



A video promoting China is displayed on a big screen in Times Square in New York.

CFP Photo

Expert's view

It's not in China's DNA to pursue hegemony

By Li Zhixin

With China's continuing rise, various versions of "China will be the next hegemony" can be heard from the Western world without end.

But hegemony requires, in addition to a powerful military force and sustainable economic development, a highly aggressive foreign policy that has public support. China simply does not meet the requirement, nor do its people have the desire.

China was the victim of Western imperialism and therefore has an appreciation for how difficult it is to achieve peace. China's top leaders have repeatedly said China opposes hegemonies and that China will never seek to become one.

Six hundred years ago, Chinese navigator Zheng He led a great fleet of 28,000 sailors to explore the world seven times.

They visited more than 30 countries along the Pacific and Indian oceans. Some materials suggest they even sailed around Australia and the Americas. Zheng's fleet was the most powerful naval force in the world at that time, but they never invaded or robbed any country. Instead, they brought gifts of tea, silk, chinaware, herbal medicine and musical instruments.

Zheng's experience was not an individual case. Since the Spring and Autumn Period, the ancient Chinese have regarded harmony as an important political principle. Confucius had been stressing the importance of fulfilling harmonious thought into practice. Modern China has also made "seeking common ground while reserving differences and promoting a peaceful co-existence and co-development" as the cornerstone of its foreign policy.

Although China has had great suc-

cess in the last 30 years with its economy – a 9.8 percent average increase of gross domestic product – China still needs a peaceful international environment to develop its economy and raise its people's living standard, considering a large portion of its 1.4 billion people still live in poverty.

Many Westerners have been worrying about the growth of Chinese military strength, but this development is reasonable: China has a long border, the security situation in its peripheral regions is complicated and China hasn't realized national reunification, so the first task of the Chinese military is to protect national sovereignty, territorial integrity and national security.

China's military capability is still limited, so it needs to continuously improve the modernization of national defense and the army. And don't forget that China

is a country at high risk of natural disasters, so one of the most important tasks for the military is disaster relief work. After the Wenchuan Earthquake in 2008, for example, nearly 1.5 million soldiers were sent to earthquake-affected areas. What's more, China's army plays a role in UN peacekeeping missions and in international disaster assistance.

China's strategic purpose is very clear: to peacefully search for national rejuvenation and follow a national defense policy that is defensive in nature. No matter how powerful China's economy gets, China will neither seek hegemony now nor in the future, nor pose a threat to any country economically or militarily.

– Xiao Huanrong,
dean of the International Relationship Department, Political Science and Law College, Communication University of China

The third eye

Will China buy the world?

By Huang Daohen

Will rising China buy the world? Zhao Xiao, a leading economist at the University of Science and Technology Beijing, expressed doubt. He said the problem now is whether the country has the ability to buy the world.

Zhao, who has followed the development of Chinese enterprises for many years, said a lack of executives with multicultural knowledge and experience managing foreign employees poses a serious challenge for Chinese companies.

Zhao believes China's growing influ-

ence has given Chinese companies the goal of going global, but actually doing so is proving much more difficult.

More time is needed, he said. Zhao's prescription for the problem is clear: innovation, global experience and soft skills.

Zhao said domestic companies, especially state-owned companies, should make more effort to innovate. "Playing copycat will not result in sustained growth, even though mere imitation may bring in substantial short-term profits," he said.

Innovation is not only applied to products and technologies, but also

to management and business modes, Zhao said.

Chinese companies' lack of global experience will be a hindrance. Zhao said half of all executives have no cross-cultural training and would not accept a foreign assignment.

By contrast, multinationals based in developed countries often make such postings a must for career advancement.

Many Chinese companies have started to deal with this lack of global experience by sending their best managers to intensive management training programs.

Along with experience, Zhao said Chinese managers must learn to delegate, to coach and to have difficult conversations with colleagues. These soft skills, increasingly important as an organization expands across the globe, are generally underused and underappreciated in local business culture.

"In the long run, mergers and acquisitions are beneficial to the healthy growth of Chinese companies," Zhao said. "Merging and becoming part of the global economy to increase mutual reliance through cooperation is much safer than being isolated."

Toyland goes green

Toymakers tackle safety issues to win children

By Huang Daohen

Western parents know all is not well in the Chinese toyland: the products are badly designed, low quality and, occasionally, dangerous. The shower of complaints has prompted import crackdowns around the globe.

Toymakers say it's time to toy with a new business model. Some domestic toymakers recently teamed up for an exhibition at the recent world's biggest toy fair in Nuremberg, where they hope to win more customers through innovation, quality and smart designs instead of aggressive discounts.



Toys on display at a toy fair booth. The value of China's toy exports grew 30.3 percent last year.

He Jianhua/IC Photo

Standard barrier

Yang Jiexing, a Zhejiang-based toymaker and trader, was apprehensive about the overseas market. Yang was relieved to find his company still received large orders from loyal overseas buyers during the past Christmas season, recession be damned.

"It was unexpected that there would be such an influx of orders," said Yang, manager of Xingxing Toys and Crafts in Yiwu, the world's largest wholesale market for small products.

The factory, with annual sales of around 5 million yuan, employs about 20 workers and produces stuffed dolls as Christmas gifts for children in North America and Europe.

During peak operations, Yang had to bring in migrant workers to make up for the staff he lost to Spring Festival celebrations.

But the world was different in 2007, when toymakers like Yang experienced an unprecedented credit crisis and the recall of thousands of products.

"It was the most difficult year

in more than a decade," Yang said.

The crisis began with the recall of Chinese toys sold by US-based Mattel. Mattel's move was followed by many similar recalls of China-made exports, from toys to toothpaste.

Orders plummeted as costs surged: buyers cut prices and safety became stringent, Yang said.

Quality concerns weren't the only reason for the recalls. Disputes over standards and technical barriers also played a large role.

For Yang, the biggest problem was that he had to frequently adjust production lines due to different importing standards. When orders from the European Union were cancelled, Yang had to change the machinery to meet US standards.

Sometimes, Yang said he had to change the production lines once a week. "This greatly hurt our factory's efficiency and boosted the costs," he said.

Yang said he believed his products were safe. "Exporting poor quality and unsafe products would get us punished. The loss

of trust would endanger our livelihood," he said.

New business model

But Yang's confidence in his quality won't bring back any customers.

Some 200 top Chinese toymakers who attended the Nuremberg Toy Fair, held from February 3 to 8, said "green" toys – those that are eco-friendly, high-tech and well designed – are the market's future.

Yang agrees. "Quality and design are now the top priorities in our production. They are more important than material and labor costs," he said.

Last year, the country saw a nationwide wage hike. Coastal cities like Guangzhou raised the cost of raw material and labor by 10 to 15 percent.

But Yang said higher prices won't hurt overseas business as long as the quality is good. He set up his own research team in 2008, focusing on producing smart animated toys. The team also developed a cartoon series.

Cheap toys cannot survive competition and trade protec-

tionism any more, Yang said.

Wen Yijun, an analyst at Oriental Securities Beijing, said toymakers in China are attempting to revolutionize their business model to emphasize value-added products.

They are shifting their products from Made in China to ones Created in China, Wen said. And those products have been better received abroad because of their superior quality and design.

In addition to boosting innovation and quality, Wen said toymakers need to tap emerging markets like the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

The customs figures for 2010 are unknown as of press time, but 2009 data show that toy exports from China to the Middle East increased 8 percent, generating 20 billion yuan for the industry that year.

Moreover, Wen said the domestic market offers tremendous business opportunities. "There are a growing number of well-off families that want high-quality toys for their children," he said.

Review of WTO commitments

IPR protection improving despite problems

By Huang Daohen

Five years after the the Office of the US Trade Representative complained to the WTO about China's efforts to fulfill its WTO commitments to intellectual property rights (IPR), Yang Lixin, a professor at the Law School of the Beijing Normal University, says the situation has improved.

The State Intellectual Property Office said that, since 2001, when the country joined WTO, the government has promised to amend its legal regime to ensure its IPR protection follows the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of IPR.

The government has undertaken substantial efforts in this regard, amending its patent laws three times in accordance with international IPR rules and carrying out related obligations.

China started protecting IPR relatively late, but it is continuing to pass new legislation and improve public education about protection, Yang said.

A campaign it launched in 2005 fought online piracy and set up an approval system which required websites to obtain a license to play video contents.

At the end of 2009, the ministry said as many as 2,600 cases concerning online piracy were handled, among which 1,200 illegal websites were forced to shut down.

Still, Yang said some problems remain as the country is seen as a major battleground for counterfeiting and copyright theft.

According to an annual business report, counterfeiting and piracy have caused serious economic harm to some US businesses in China.

The report, released last month by the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai, surveyed 350 American companies in China and found IPR remained a top concern.

Some 71 percent of respondents said they felt enforcement of IPR protection had gone unchanged or further deteriorated.

But Yang said the government's efforts will continue. "The increasing awareness of IPR protection is not only the result of WTO commitment pressures, but also from the country's own needs," he said.

"It is an important step for a country's business environment to secure a stable, transparent and predictable market for both domestic and foreign innovations," Yang said.

Dialogue

Yang Jiexing is apprehensive about the overseas market, even though his Yiwu-based Xingxing Toys has seen a double-digit growth in export in recent years.

Q: Your company (Xingxing Toys) has produced many popular toys during last two years. Why do you think it has been so successful?

A: What we are making are actually low-tech products. Popular toys do not have to be high-

tech. They can be something as simple as what you see every day. The key is to make something intuitive. Think about what you touch in daily life. If you pick up an iPad and push the buttons, that is intuitive. When a baby does the same thing, it is equally intuitive.

Q: What do think of how overseas consumers see Chinese-made toys? How can we change that image?

A: I doubt their distrust was

really as severe as the media said. We get our information from overseas retailers, who are the real pros when it comes to what sells. If we want to quash the skeptics, I think the best thing we can do is bring them here and let them see what's happening in our factories. We're very serious about quality.

Nevertheless, every company has quality problems at some point. It's impossible not to make mistakes on occasion when you are making goods. We

try hard to do the best job we can and work quickly to eliminate new quality problems.

Q: What lies ahead for the country's toy industry? What plans does your company have this year?

A: Chinese people are diligent, creative and obedient. I don't see anyone overtaking the power of Chinese toy manufacturers.

This year, we are adding new toys and bringing out a couple new lines. We also plan to tap more emerging markets.

Experimental autonomous university strives to be world-class

By Liang Meilan

The Chinese mainland's universities, both public and private, are under the supervision of the Ministry of Education (MOE), but one university in Shenzhen has dared to break away from government oversight.

The South University of Science and Technology (SUST), established in 2007, claims to be a pioneer in education reform. In fact, until last month, it was considered "illegal" due to a lack of official recognition.

The school was set up by the Municipal Shenzhen Government using offbeat educational models to challenge China's conventional academic traditions, which are too bureaucratic, said Zhu Shiqing, the school's president and one of its founding members.

As a prestigious physical chemist and former president of the University of Science and Technology of China (USTC), Zhu is famous for his fearless actions in educational reform. During the 10 years he was in office at USTC, he insisted on not joining waves of universities that expanded student enrollment and opened satellite campuses.

Zhu made an even bolder decision last December to start enrolling students independently from the ministry and to issue degrees that are ratified by the school alone. Basically, students won't get state-recognized degrees upon graduation.

Yet more than a thousand students expressed interest, out of which the school will choose 50 for its inaugural semester that starts up in the spring. According to an online poll of nearly 10,000 parents, 67 percent said they would be willing to send their children to SUST.

"We are confident in recruiting 50 high-quality students before early March," Zhu said.

"Many universities realize that the biggest hindrance to China's universities from gaining world-class status is the rampant bureaucratic culture and rigid administrative system," Zhu said. "No one is brave enough to break them. I want to try."

Self-defined as idealistic, the 64-year-old president believes that for universities, the right to autonomously enroll students and issue degrees is an essential first step in creating world-class institutions of higher learning.



Physical chemist Zhu Qingshi is challenging China's academic conventions and traditions. CFP Photo

Comment

Employment is a challenge

The actions that SUST are taking touches on other social problems. One is the problem of student employment: students without state-approved degrees might not get the time of day from employers. If SUST is successful in ensuring its

students to get jobs, it will have contributed greatly to China's education system.

— Xiang Xianming, director of Comparative Education Institute at Beijing Normal University

SUST must deliver results

Education reform is encouraged.

Favorable policies and government support will follow if SUST generates good results.

— Wang Feng, director of the Education Reform Institute at the National Education Development Research Center

Online voices from Sina.com

For

Hope for China's education

SUST's actions show China's education has hope. I believe students from this university won't be less capable than those from Tsinghua and Peking University. As for the degree, as long as society acknowledges it, it won't be a problem. Gold will shine no matter where it's from.

— Aiguo

It's high time for reform

Compared to China's fast economic

and social reform, education reform is lagging far behind. It's about time we address this alarming problem.

— Yunzhongmanbu

Against

Difficult to promote across the country

SUST is located in the progressive city of Shenzhen, where experimental ideas are easy to carry out. It'll be much harder for the SUST model to be applied

across the country, especially in less developed parts.

— scetclym

Unfair to use students as guinea pigs

There's no doubt that university reform is important, but we shouldn't use students as test subjects here. The university needs to ensure its system to be foolproof and that graduates will receive social recognition.

— Tanluzhe

Should I continue taking care of my grandson?



Many Chinese children are raised by grandparents.

Pan Songgang/CFP Photo

By Zhao Hongyi

This week, a grandmother posted an article online condemning her daughter and son-in-law for refusing to take care of their son.

The grandma, whose identity wasn't divulged, said she has had to take care of her grandson in Changsha essentially since he was born.

After a brief quarrel over living expenditures, "they eventually agreed to give me 1,000 per month for all costs and expenditures," the grandma wrote on the forum bbs.voc.com.cn.

But because her son-in-law couldn't hold a steady job, the grandma has begun receiving less than 1,000 a month.

The grandma was further enraged when she learned the average salary of a babysitter is 2,000 yuan a month.

"Should I continue to take care of my grandson or withdraw?" she asked in the forum. She said she could not bear the burden any more.

Thirty years ago in China, it was common for children to be reared by their grandparents. Elders were in fact delighted to be caretakers.

But society has changed rapidly. It's more common for young couples to hire babysitters or housekeepers if they have the ability.

In this case, it appears the grandmother is upset because her son-in-law can't provide for his son, despite everyone's best efforts.

Comment

Clarify expenditure and salary

We should get a clear picture of the dispute. Is it that the father has no economic ability to cover the expenditures, or doesn't want to pay his mother-in-law?

If it's the latter, the grandma should give support to the young couple and continue taking care of her grandson. When

the financial situation of the kid's father gets better, the young couple should pay the grandma more as compensation.

— Vivi Mama, netizen

Grandparents are waking up

Chinese grandparents have been used as free babysitters for thousands of years. It's time to remind young people to take on their

own responsibilities.

— Zhang Degiang, a grandfather raising his 3-year-old grandson

No obligation to raise the kid

Grandparents have the right to ask for payment for babysitting, just like anyone else. These issues should not be debated in public, but rather left to the

families to decide.

— Chen Pingfan, lawyer

It's a heavy burden!

Today in China, living costs are rising year by year. It's costing more to raise a child. The young couple should not rely on their grandparents because it's a heavy burden on them. — Bulu Granny, netizen

Cover performances reveal songwriters' dilemma



By Wang Yu

The Internet and TV reality shows offer aspiring singers an opportunity for instant fame and wealth. But many of these performers use shortcuts in the form of other artists' work to win attention.

Standing on the shoulders of giants is a good strategy, but should people be allowed to do so for profit?

The lack of clear copyright laws in Chinese music has long been a problem. What should be done about musicians who specialize in covering music but create nothing new of their own?



Wang Xu and Liu Gang performing at the Spring Festival Gala

"In the Spring"

Pop singer Wang Feng is a commercially successful artist, so when two guys off the street, Wang Xu and Liu Gang, gained public attention by singing his 2009 hit "In the Spring" with impressive flair, Wang Feng was initially receptive of their success.

Wang Xu is a 44-year-old warehouse manager and Liu a 26-year-old street singer. The two were relatively anonymous until last August, when they recorded a video of themselves singing "In the Spring" after a couple of drinks.

Netizens were taken by their passion and sincerity. The video went viral, attracting more than 10 million views.

Wang Feng was gracious at first, inviting the two to sing with him. The trio performed on TV shows, including this year's CCTV Spring Festival Gala.

But when Wang Xu and Liu were offered steady gigs around the country, with a single performance said to draw 30,000 to 50,000 yuan, Wang Feng had seen enough. Last week, he told the duo they could no longer use his song in commercial concerts.

"It is Wang Feng's song, and as the songwriter, he has the right to do this," said Li Dong, Wang Xu and Liu's manager.

Commentators wondered whether this was the first case of an artist exercising his copyright and intently watched for the fallout.

Who does the public back?

To most music industry insiders, Wang Feng was exercising his rights as a songwriter. But Wang Xu and Liu were the sentimental favorites among the public, and the case grew more controversial.

Netizens claimed that Wang Xu and Liu gave the song greater exposure, bringing windfall to Wang Feng as well.

Wang Feng replied on his blog: "Now they are well known and have their own fans. They are not grassroots singers anymore. As they are singing my song for commercial purposes, it's time to talk



Wang Feng is an established rock singer and songwriter.

CFP Photo

about copyrights. It is similar to protecting your child."

Wang said he allowed the group to sing his song in the beginning because he wanted to help them. He even gave up his Spring Festival performance payment so the duo could buy a better guitar. But because Wang Xu and Liu have begun their professional career as singers, Wang Feng said, they should write their own songs.

CCTV host Li Xiaomeng wrote on his Sina microblog that this situation amounts to a public relations disaster for Wang Feng. She said most people like the song because of the performers, not the songwriter. Wang's initial generosity has been spoiled by his lack of willingness to compromise in the end, she said.

Wang Xu and Li have received criticism as well. "It is a joke that a TV host would ignore basic copyright law," said Yang Yue, a radio host and show organizer.

"It's like lending your bicycle. You can do it, but others can't force you to," said Liu Ping, vice director-general of the Music Copyright Society of China.

According to international practice, members of the Society should give their

performance and broadcasting right to the organization for further management. However, a member can still choose to keep his rights to certain songs.

Liu said while this case has no precedence, he believes Wang Feng has the right to make the final decision about his song.

Law is not enough

Netizens who support Wang Feng criticized loopholes in the copyright law. But Liu said it's not the law that's at fault but the enforcement.

The public is still largely unaware of how creative works – intellectual property, in other words – are protected under current international law.

Compared with pop idols, most songwriters don't earn much from royalties. The bulk of the revenue goes to singers, record labels and agents. Things have become even worse in the digital age with the prevalence of illegal downloading.

Last year, an artist from the indie electric music label Shanshui cited Xiami.com, one of the most popular online radio sites, for stealing its music. Songs are uploaded by users who don't care about

the legality of their actions. Registered members can then download MP3 files by using virtual "xia" coins, earned through uploading music or exchanged with real money.

The site has never contacted any artist or label about royalty payments.

R2G – a company that has established an efficient and reliable delivery system of digital music content with proper accounting as well as a process for licensing digital music in China – offers an alternative.

R2G also operates as a copyright agent. The company has been involved in nine legal cases on behalf of individual artists against seven companies in China with successful conclusions for the copyright owners. The cases resulted in 60,000 total – or about 5,000 to 7,000 per song. But five of the companies had already earned about 3 million yuan in revenue from the artists' songs.

At last year's TransmitNow in China – a yearly event that focus on music industry, Wu Jun, CEO of R2G, said artists should start to protect their own rights now.

In this case, Wang Feng was not simply a songwriter but also a successful pop singer – the identity that caught the public's attention. But to most independent artists, illegal use of their music is hard to prevent. It partly because compared with mainstream songs, piracy of indie music is hard to detect. On the other hand, digital downloading helps the artists build their names, which leaves them with a dilemma.

"After all, cases like 'In the Spring' will not take place in the indie scene as most artists don't have the influence as Wang Feng," said Gong Heling, guitarist of rock band Sound Toy.

What makes the "In the Spring" case remarkable is that it brings copyright protection – an old topic back on table in the public. Liu said that it also reflects the fact that China's copyright business chain and the law environment is not well formed. It still takes times for both the artists and public.

NGO giving the gift of smiles



Scott Snyder

Photo provided by Scott Snyder

By Liang Meilan

Around the world, approximately one in every 600 children each year is born with a cleft lip or cleft palate. Surgery can easily correct the problem, but at about 1,500 yuan, it's not affordable for many people in developing countries.

The charity organization Operation Smile is working to change that by procuring donations to pay for corrective surgery.

Scott Snyder, 29, is the program development manager of Operation Smile China. To raise awareness of his organization, he and his colleagues collaborated with Wokai, a microfinance NGO, to host an event at Face Bar on Tuesday.

Snyder started working with Operation Smile as a mission coordinator organizing medical missions in Virginia five years ago. He was sent to missions in countries including South Korea and Cambodia in his first year. Later, he worked in a regional office in Vietnam.

He was a political science major who wanted to pursue a career in law or politics, but what he saw working for Operation Smile fueled his passion for humanitarian work.

"The job is meaningful especially because we get to see the transformation of a child," Snyder said. "The social stigma of having

a cleft lip is extremely high. To be able to change that and make sure these kids can live longer lives is a very important part of my work."

Incidences of cleft lip and palate are higher in Asia than other regions, at about one child per 500. There are two causes for the disease: lack of nutrition and genetics.

Snyder said ongoing recent research shows environmental pollution may also contribute to the disease.

Last year, Snyder was named program development manager, and his first task was a weighty one: to conduct Operation Smile China's 20th anniversary celebration later this year and draw up a plan for the company's future in China.

As program development manager, Snyder must multitask. The most important part of working in China is fundraising. Most of the company's funds comes from Hong Kong, but since the establishment of a charity hospital in Hangzhou in 2007, where children with cleft lips are sent for care, the need to raise money on the mainland is more urgent than ever.

"It is true that there is large untapped market, but it still takes a lot of work approaching local companies and foundations," Snyder said.

So far, Snyder and his team

have secured money from multinational corporations in China like KPMG and Tata Motors.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is an idea that is now very popular among Chinese corporations. "We are coming to utilize that when we approach organizations and companies," Snyder said.

Snyder is also in charge of overseeing medical programs, even though he doesn't come from a medical background. He goes on missions to make sure hospitals adhere to program protocols.

"I'm not a doctor, but I can manage them and make sure the missions run as smoothly as possible," he said. "What I do is logistics."

Another task is forming partnerships with government bodies, which can be tricky.

China has a unique approach to NGOs. The country tries hard to make sure organizations do what they say they're doing, so NGOs are required to report constantly to the government.

"That's really challenging because in other countries, you just sign a memorandum of understanding or contract with the government, but in China, you have to work with them hand in hand," Snyder said.

Snyder said he feels happy working here because many NGOs have been generous about

lending advice and sharing their experiences working in this environment.

In the end, though, what matters most is changing lives.

"Being able to see a family's joy after their child has received the surgery is rewarding," Snyder said. "You can also see the transformation in grown-ups who receive the surgery, even people as old as 50."

Over the past 20 years, Operation Smile China has evaluated 20,000 cases of clefting and sponsored operations for more than 17,000 people. Last year alone, 2,743 Operation Smile surgeries were performed in Hangzhou.

As part of the organization's anniversary celebration, 25 missions are expected to provide more than 2,000 operations from March until November in 23 cities.

"We're also trying to get more corporations, celebrities and volunteers involved to spread awareness of what the organization is doing," Snyder said.

Another large-scale educational event that Operation Smile will participate in is an international student cultural exchange in Beijing, where 750 high school and college students from around the world will talk about community service.

The anniversary celebration's opening gala will happen April 28 at the Palace Museum.

German bag designer seeks balance between sales and social responsibility

By Wang Yu

Thomas Fahrholz, founder of the customized bag brand o8/15, moved to Beijing two years ago from Germany determined to continue his career in the city he dreamed of living in when he was a child.

He grew up in a small town in Bavaria and went on to study Chinese history, language and culture in Berlin. When he first visited Beijing in 1998, he was thrilled by the mixture of the old and new. He stayed briefly in 2007, splitting his time between China and Vietnam, before going back to Germany to start o8/15 in June 2009.

When he moved back in September of that year, Fahrholz was determined to build his brand in Beijing.

After some research, he decided that bags made out of truck tarp – not too complicated to produce, fashionable and not readily available in the Chinese market – were what was needed.

"One important point for me was to build a brand that is dedicated to socially responsible business behavior," Fahrholz said. "Because of this, we try to do as many projects as possible with Miaology, a workshop that provides job opportunities for the disabled and members of ethnic minorities."

The name o8/15 comes from a German idiom roughly meaning "very plain." It's a reference to the

serial number of a machine gun that was widely used by the German Army during World War I. When the soldiers returned from the front, they started referring to standard items as "something o8/15."

Besides, Fahrholz said, numbers are something everyone can understand, which is good for brand visibility.

As a designer, Fahrholz is a big fan of clear shapes and simple colors. The designs on the bag flaps are mostly simple shapes or inspired by street art.

Fahrholz's Chinese partner, Kong Zehui, used to be a manager and buyer of brands such as Esprit and M.TSUBOMI. She is critical in finding suppliers and negotiating deals. o8/15 currently has seven types of messenger bag sizes in 15 different colors. The next step will be accessories like shoulder pads, key chains and wallets. Currently the brand is cooperating with local designers to extend the product line.

The initial plan of o8/15 was to custom-build every bag. However, Fahrholz found that production of individual products was very complicated in a market geared towards mass production. The team has gradually introduced simpler designs that can be easily adjusted according to customer requests.

By working with charity labels such as Brand Nü o8/15 is also



Thomas Fahrholz and Kong Zehui

Photo provided by Thomas Fahrholz

taking part in social issues.

"We also sell overseas, mainly to Europe. Sales figures are getting better and better. Still, we aim for quality in the products and

sustainability of growth rather than a big market share," Fahrholz said.

Fahrholz has invested a lot of time, energy and money into

the o8/15 project. As o8/15 is still in the start-up phase, he sometimes has to work as a freelancer to make ends meet.

Fahrholz said he is not a big sales or marketing person – taking pride in making the products and resolving technical details – so finding a salesperson is a priority for the company. But sales volume, he emphasized, is not the most important goal of o8/15. By designing a more flexible production process and introducing features on the website, Fahrholz hopes his label will become a design platform for bags like Spreadshirt or Threadless is for T-Shirts.

"The best thing that's happened during this project is that I've gotten to know so many interesting people," Fahrholz said. "Most of them are strong individuals with a vision to develop a more egalitarian society that is more creative at the same time."

"I was also impressed by the flexibility of my partners. Of course, it was difficult to put all the pieces together and make the project work. But on the other hand, that is the most interesting part about a start-up, isn't it?"

o8/15's products can be found at Palma Boutique in Nanli Patio, Natooke Bike Shop and Plastered Shops both in Beijing and Shanghai.

Foreigners perform crosstalk at Laoshe Teahouse

By Chu Meng

Last Sunday night, foreign students and expats raised the roof at Laoshe Teahouse, a popular place for appreciating Chinese tea culture, as they performed traditional crosstalk.

Participants said they did it to celebrate the Lantern Festival, which was this past Thursday. Traditionally, the Lantern Festival falls on the 15th day of the first lunar month. Since the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC – AD 25), families have gathered on this day to watch lanterns and eat yuanxiao, a rice dumpling.

The students were tutored by Ding Guangquan, a notable comic dialogue master. Since the 1990s, Ding has had more than 40 foreign students from the US, France, Ireland, Canada, Romania and Iran.

British student Daniel Newham, or Da Niu in Chinese; Francis Tchiegue –Jie Gai – from Cameroon; and Julien Gaudfroy, or Zhu Li'an, from France, were the stars of the show.

The three are all somewhat known among comedy circles in Beijing. Because of their language proficiency, they often host programs on Chinese TV and the annual Chinese Language Proficiency Competition.

With their new skills, they performed a traditional Peking Opera number, "Shajiabang." Liam Bates, 22, from Switzerland, sang "Jingyun Dagou" in Old Beijing dialect with drum accompaniment.

"Learning traditional arts, such as crosstalk, is a shortcut for us to improve our Chinese," Bates said. He has been learn-



Foreign students of Chinese crosstalk perform traditional songs in Old Beijing dialect.

Photo provided by Wang Zhe

ing Mandarin for six years and, in addition to crosstalk, studies martial arts.

"If you want to perform crosstalk on stage and make the audience laugh, you have to make your spoken Chinese extraordinary clear and standard," he said. "It is harder than just learning at a university."

Crosstalk is an art traditionally performed at teahouses. Ding was happy to bring it back with foreign performers.

"This is my way of spreading the traditional art," Ding said.

He said when he teaches foreigners, he usually adapts scripts, some of which are very traditional, even out-of-date. Ding adds something new according to the student's skills, personality and cultural background.

"Sometimes I add cultural elements from the country where the student came from. By doing so, cultural diversity can be presented in an extremely funny way," he said.

The 67-year-old comedian has been teaching crosstalk for more than 20 years free of charge and

has helped more than 160 foreigners perform on TV. His most successful apprentice is Canadian Mark Rowsell, better known as Dashan, who has been the most famous foreigner in China since the 1990s.

Ding still holds a regular seminar every Saturday at the campus of Beijing University of Chemical Technology. "Any foreigners interested in traditional Chinese culture and the art of crosstalk can visit me," he said.

Ding can be contacted through Laoshe Teahouse at 6301 1974.

Learn I Ching with Chinese culture master

By Liang Meilan

The I Ching, sometimes called the *Book of Changes*, is one of the oldest texts in China. It has become popular among foreigners plumbing for deeper insight into Chinese culture and philosophy.

But very few have had the opportunity to learn from an I Ching instructor who can communicate effectively in English. That will soon change: 60-year-old I Ching expert Rock Wang, who is fluent in English, is offering a course for locals and expats at his home, which can accommodate about 30 people.

Wang was formerly an English teacher at high schools and universities. Before teaching, he practiced traditional Chinese medicine and began learning I Ching when he was in his early 20s.

"When I was young, I got totally lost in learning Chinese medicine and acupuncture. It was easy to recite prescriptions passed on for generations, but I had no idea what on earth Chinese medicine actually was until one day a friend of mine lent me some Chinese classic texts,



I Ching expert Rock Wang teaching classes to foreigners

Photo provided by Rock Wang

including *I Ching*," he said.

Since, studying I Ching has been a significant part of Wang's life. He even references the book in his English classes when he compares and contrasts Chinese culture with Western culture.

Some of the concepts of I Ching are tricky to grasp, such as the trigrams and hexagrams, but an experienced instructor will incorporate humor and games into his lessons.

Wang emphasizes that the

course is not about teaching superstition. He uses the Big Bang theory as an analogue when explaining Tao and the circular symbol Taiji (the yin-yang diagram), how they are actually representations of cosmic principles.

In teaching the theory of Yifenwei, Wang uses the analogy of flipping a coin.

"The aim of all the activities involved in I Ching teaching is to help people realize that I Ching is more so an important branch of

philosophy than a tool for divination," Wang said.

Wang has added games to the class to keep students' attention.

Monique van de Geijn from the Netherlands, one of the students, recalled how playing a guessing game during class demonstrated the concept of Shefu, a skill used by diviners.

Van de Geijn was asked to think of an object. By asking some simple questions, Wang and other masters were able to get Van de Geijn to reveal what the object was.

Wang's son, Grant, is also an I Ching master.

"Through proper classification and reasoning, what's hidden can be figured out," he said.

Potential students should review basic I Ching concepts, such as the "six trigrams," before attending class. People are allowed a free trial class.

Where: 708, Unit 4, Wanfangjingxuan Complex, 6 Xiajiayuan, Taiyangong Zhonglu, Chaoyang District

When: To be determined

Tel: 13071136035

Cost: 200 yuan per class

Event

Beijing cultural heritage observation session

L'Institut d'Etudes Supérieures des Arts (IESA) in Paris is organizing its first cultural heritage camp in town until February 18. French language classes are offered daily. IESA professor Denis Lavalie will give lectures on cultural heritage appraisal, and participants will get to see priceless art works.

Where: IESA Beijing Representative Office, Foreign Center Plaza, Room 1517, 6 Gongti Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: February 18, 8:30 am – 8 pm

Tel: 8523 6391

Cost: 850 yuan

Children's language program

Want to train your children's language skills at an early age with an efficient method? Try ABC Music and Me, a research-based early childhood curriculum center that uses bundled, thematic lessons to help young children learn important language, listening and social skills created by Kindermusik International, a leading provider of early childhood programs. It also helps strengthen fine-motor, gross-motor and locomotor skills, as well as cultivating sharing, self-regulation and self-control.

Where: POP MOMA apartments, 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District (please call for exact venue)

When: Every Saturday, 10-10:45 am

Tel: 13621354114

Cost: 120 yuan per class

Origami workshop for kids

Origami artist Mikame Tsuyako from Japan is holding a workshop to teach children traditional paper folding. Children of all ages will learn how to fold various formations and improve their manual dexterity and concentration skills while exploring creativity and the potential of imagination.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: February 19, 10-11:30 am

Tel: 8459 9269

Cost: 50 yuan per child

Young opinion leader talks about science

Ji Shisan, founder of the Science Squirrels Club, an organization that teaches science through humorous events and conferences, will talk about how the organization came into being and how it has developed, as well as his personal experience of trying to popularize science.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: February 20, 4-6 pm

Tel: 6438 6675

Cost: Free

(By Liang Meilan)

Price for renting apartments increases again

By Zhao Hongyi

The month following Spring Festival is traditionally a time of escalating property prices as young professionals and workers return to Beijing or come for the first time.

But housing demand has increased earlier than usual this year, said Chen Deming, manager of a local branch of Centaline Property, a national property agent.

"It's really beyond our expectations," Chen said.

On February 8, Chen and his colleagues received more than a dozen inquiries for renting houses. His chain stores in Beijing closed more than 20 deals on February 6 and 7, Chen said.

From February 9-12, Centaline Property in Beijing received nearly 1,500 inquiries for renting houses, a 40 percent increase over the same period last year.

Centaline is in charge of fewer than 400 units, which means demand far exceeds supply.

Many people are collecting roommates to share apartments, said Sun Defu, a broker at a Daxing District branch of Century 21.

"The most popular apartments are the three-bedroom ones," Sun said.

The average price for a one-bedroom apartment is around 2,500 yuan per month; it is 3,000 yuan for a two-bedroom apartment and 4,000 yuan for a three-bedroom apartment.

About 39 percent of all inquiries are for three-bedroom apartments, a 12 percent increase from last year, according to statistics from Homelink, another real estate company in Beijing.

The Chinese government has increased financial rates, forcing commercial banks to be more cautious in releasing property loans and credits. The municipal government is also discussing the possibility of levying real estate taxes, following the lead of cities like Shanghai and Chongqing.

Tighter restrictions toward speculative buying are aimed at encouraging potential apartment buyers to take a wait-and-see attitude in the market. The hope is that prices will come down when speculative buying is curbed.

The central and municipal governments have also issued notices warning against excessive remodeling. Splitting a unit into smaller rooms can create fire hazards and sanitation problems.

Apartment hunters are concentrated in the three districts of Chaoyang, Haidian and Fengtai, occupying nearly 65 percent of the overall demand, Homelink said.

In the meantime, demand for purchases is decreasing.

Various property agents have said the demand for rented apartments will continue to rise until March and April, probably by 20 to 30 percent in downtown areas.

Rent in residential communities beyond Fifth Ring Road is also expected to rise by 10 per-

Four small advertisements for apartment rentals in Beijing. Each ad includes a '租' (Rent) sign, location, floor, price, and contact info.

The cost of renting apartments in Beijing continues to rise.

Shen Jingwei/CFP Photo

cent, especially along the newly built subways in the districts of Daxing, Fangshan and Yizhuang.

Experts recommend signing longer contracts during the apartment rental process. In many cases, a tenant can receive a 10 percent lower price for each addition year he or she agrees to take on.

The villa and housing market has not seen any price fluctuations so far.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

I just learned that the firework stands will be removed after Lantern Festival. I was planning on buying fireworks for my girl's birthday celebration in June, though. The vendors I spoke to told me I couldn't buy fireworks after they leave. Is this for real?

Those firework stands did make things easier, but you can still buy fireworks year-round, except you have to purchase wholesale: a minimum of 10 boxes. Wholesalers usually deliver for free. But please note that according to official safety regulations, a family can only store one box of fireworks weighing about 30 kilograms. Also, you are not allowed to set off fireworks within Fifth Ring Road except during the first 15 days of the lunar new year.

For more details, contact Beijing Fireworks Company, 33 Majiabao Lu, Fengtai District; tel: 8726 2769.

I recently moved into a new apartment and want to decorate the walls of my bedroom. The most artistic idea I've come up with is to paste some posters with Chinese features, but where can I find some?

We suggest you try some old Chinese movie posters, which can be found at BC MOMA cinema at 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District. Please note that some can be potentially expensive.

I've come for an exchange program at Peking University. Back in the US I was active in business events discussing corporate social responsibility (CSR). Are there such events in Beijing?

You can try Social Innovation Meet Up, which organizes events related to CSR and social innovation as well as entrepreneurship. The group has an event on February 22 about CSR. Google the group for more information.

Several days ago I rescued a stray dog, but my landlord told me I couldn't keep it because it's too big and that I'll be fined. How might I keep this dog?

People in downtown areas can't legally keep large dogs. But you might have seen some people walking big dogs late at night around commercial areas like Sanlitun. We've asked them about that, and they say they never worry about bumping into police at that time. If bending the law makes you uncomfortable, we suggest moving to Shunyi or Tongzhou, where dog-size restrictions don't apply.

(By Liang Meilan)

First multilingual Dharma assembly held in Longquan Temple



Longquan Temple's first multilingual Dharma Assembly

Photos provided by Longquan Temple

By Li Zhixin

A multilingual Dharma Assembly was held in Longquan Temple, situated at Phoenix Mountain northwest of Haidian District, during the Lantern Festival on Thursday.

The assembly was designed for the recitation of Buddhist Sutra in languages including Chinese, Tibetan, English, German, French, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Sanskrit, Russian, Vietnamese, Latin and Pali.

This was the first time that a Buddhist temple in China held such an event. "With China's rising, more foreigners are becoming interested in traditional Chinese culture, which naturally leads them to learn Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, which are closely inter-



Master Xuecheng (right) meeting prayers from all over the world

twined and jointly prop up the spirit of the Chinese people," said Master Xuecheng, the temple's head monk.

Visitors attended morning and evening chanting sessions, presented auspicious offerings to Buddha and participated in traditional Chinese lantern festival activities such as eating sweet dumplings, praying for blessedness, freeing captive

animals and answering riddles.

Joseph Perry, the American editor of the temple's English website, said the event provided expats a chance to learn Buddhist history and Dharma, as well as monastic life in China.

Xuecheng said in order to better spread traditional Chinese culture, the temple will normalize the multilingual

Dharma assembly during traditional festivals. The temple will also open a multilingual microblog to introduce daily life in Longquan Temple to foreigners and release notices for upcoming events.

How to join:

Bring your ID card, passport, student card or Longquan Temple certificate for registration. Visitors are advised to wear warm clothes, as the area around Longquan Temple can get quite cold.

How to get there: Take Bus 346 from Summer Palace to Phoenix Mountain.

Website: longquanzs.org/eng.

For more information, contact Wang Min at longquanen@live.cn or 13699276069.

Critics weigh in



1. 30 Days: Zhou Bin's project (Golden Palm) 2. Gao Brothers' Lenin (Golden Razzies) 3. He Yunchang's performance One Meter Democracy topped the list of Golden Palm. 4. Zhang Huan's installation

Now still collected in piles on the streets of 798 Art District, but the atmosphere in Yi House was burning hot. The hall was overcrowded with artists, critics and media waiting to see the 10 best and 10 worst works of the last year.

Regarded as the fourth generation of art critics, the 24 critics included curators, professors and columnists. Most were born after 1970 and became critics after 2004.

But they reject such classifications. "There is no clear line between the older generation and us. Unlike them, we face a multicultural art scene, and therefore pay more attention to individual artists and individual works rather than attempting to analyze the mission and spirit of the generation," He Guiyan said.

The young critics advocate the importance of different views on individual work. "Every critic can value a piece from his or her own perspective. But when they come together, it is dangerous to try and ignore certain sharp criticisms just to reach a consensus," Bao Dong said.

Unlike other art awards, the Golden Palm and Golden Razzies respect each judge's opinion. Different voices are heard in the selection process, and the sum

of all votes determines the results. It is not strange to find a piece that wins both a Golden Palm and a Golden Razzie.

After three rounds of discussion last weekend, He Yunchang's performance *One Meter Democracy* topped the list of Golden Palm recipients with 13 votes.

He is a leading performance artist based in Beijing. His series of performances place exceptional physical demands upon himself both in terms of his strength and endurance.

For his 2007 performance *Mahjong*, he made a unique version of Mahjong using large cement bricks. He played the game in New York's Washington Square for four hours.

Last October, he displayed his latest work, *One Meter Democracy*, at Caochangdi. At first, he proposed to cut a wound on the right side of his body from his collar bone down to his knee. The wound would be 1 meter long and between 0.5 and 1 centimeters deep. The cut would be made with the assistance of a doctor, but without anesthesia.

Before the operation, there was a pseudo-democratic voting procedure. Under the guise of voting, the artist invited his friends to decide whether the proposal should be carried out. In the end, the result was 12 votes in favor of the

proposal, 10 against and three abstentions.

"It seems to be democracy in his performance, but the real face of democracy?" the critics asked.

Although He was not the first to execute such a performance, most artists rarely address the topic of democracy in their work.

If He was the night's luckiest, Ai Weiwei's *Sunflower Seeds* won both a Golden Palm and a Golden Razzie.

Last October, Ai poured 100 million of the Turbine Hall at the UK's Tate Modern. The life-sized sunflower seed husks were actually made of porcelain. Each looked identical, they were actually

Each seed was sculpted and painted by hand. It took two years of their labor to the cause in Jiayu.

Porcelain is synonymous with China. The method of crafting a historically prized ceramic is a key part of the "Made in China" phenomenon. It is a look at the "Made in China" phenomenon and its impact on the economic exchange today.



By He Jianwei

Insults are an art critic's bread and butter, because criticism is more precious than praise to the continued development of contemporary art.

A group of young critics recently unleashed their poison on the contemporary art scene, spontaneously initiating a selection of the 10 best and 10 worst works of last year. The 24 critics assess the value from the works alone, ignoring the past achievements and fame of their creators.

This Tuesday night, the panel of judges announced the recipients of their 10 Golden Palms and 10 Golden Razzies at Yi House in 798 Art District.

The best and worst in the year's contemporary art



3. Zhang Huan's *Hope Tunnel* made from a wrecked train after the 2008 Sichuan earthquake. (Golden Razzies) 4. Zhang Huan's sculpture *Hehe Xixie* (above) and Yue Minjun's *Bent Dimension* (Golden Razzies)

ns.
performance, because 25 people voted. But
the panel asked.

cute such a horrific performance, other
racy and its dual nature as a dictator-

Wei was its most embarrassed: his
m and a Golden Razzie.
sunflower seed shells into the interior
ern Museum to form a landscape. The
ually handcrafted in porcelain. While
y unique.

by one of 1,600 workers who dedicated
ingdezhen, Jiangxi Province.

so Ai manipulated the traditional
export. The exhibition provided a closer
on and the geo-politics of cultural and

With seven votes, Ai's project ranked sixth on the list of the Golden Palm recipients.

But some critics criticized the wealth and power displayed in his piece. Their six votes caused him to place eighth among the Golden Razzies.

Zhang Huan was even more miserable, because two of his works received Golden Razzies.

Half of the critics chose Zhang's social project *Hope Tunnel*, an installation made from a wrecked train after the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, as the worst work. The train was carrying 600 tons of grain and 12 tanks of aviation fuel through a tunnel on the Baoji-Chengdu railway when it collided with a massive boulder displaced by the quake and derailed. An hour later, the fuel tanks exploded, engulfing the train in flames. It was the only railway disaster related to the quake.

When Zhang saw the news reports and photos of the train tragedy, he decided to preserve the train cars and fuel tanks. The salvage company planned to sell the remaining wreckage to a steel factory to be melted down.

Negotiating with the company, Zhang bought the wreckage. It took two weeks to transport the train back to his workshop in Shanghai.

When it was exhibited at Ullens Center for Contemporary Art last July, some praised his motivation to remember the past and give hope to the future. But some doubted whether it was really art. They thought it was more appropriate for a memorial museum than an art house.

Zhang's other Razzie winner was the steel sculpture *Hehe Xixie*, two sitting pandas displayed on the axis of 2010 Shanghai Expo. They were made of mirror-finished stainless steel. Their names were a play on the word "Harmonious."

The artist said the work showed how harmony could thrive in the world, because people advocate justice, pursue peace, oppose war and aim to create a healthier environment.

But the judging panel slammed it as an obvious attempt to pander to the government's forced slogans: 11 judges voted it down as garbage.

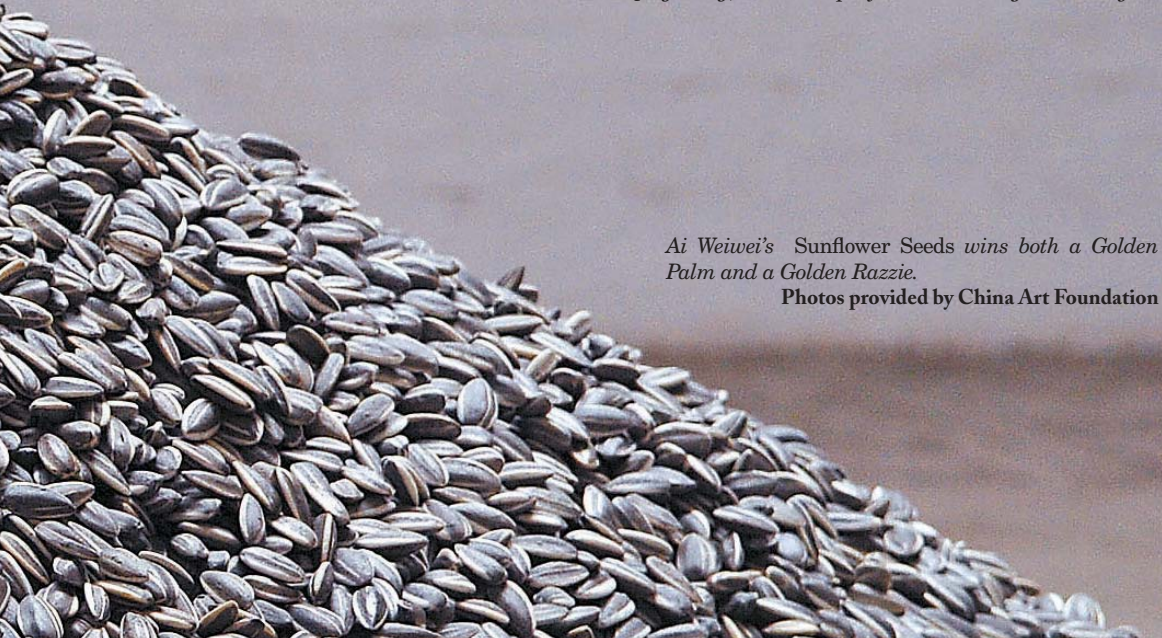
"I don't think the results are important. As a professor compiling the annual archives of contemporary art, I believe it benefits both artists and critics. The awards encourage different voices and give every voice a chance to be heard," said Zhu Qingsheng, critic and professor at Peking University, who was an invited guest at the award presentations.

"I don't think the results are important. As a professor compiling the annual archives of contemporary art, I believe it benefits both artists and critics. The awards encourage different voices and give every voice a chance to be heard."

— Zhu Qingsheng, critic and professor at Peking University

Ai Weiwei's *Sunflower Seeds* wins both a Golden Palm and a Golden Razzie.

Photos provided by China Art Foundation



CFPPhoto

New visions on contemporary Chinese and French literature

By He Jianwei

Chinese and French writers, critics and translators discussed the literary works of both cultures during a two-day seminar at National Museum of Modern Chinese Literature last month.

Participants shared their views on how classical works influence contemporary creations, how reality is addressed in stories and translation problems.

Tie Ning, president of the Chinese Writers' Association, said the two countries have long and strong literary ties. "Ancient and contemporary French writers have influenced several generations of Chinese writers. Their works inspired us. And many Chinese classical works also have many readers in France," Tie said.

Chinese writers have drawn inspiration from Western novels, especially those in the styles of realism, romanticism and surrealism as exemplified by writers like Honore de Balzac, Gustave Flaubert, Emile Zola, Marcel Proust, Samuel Beckett to Albert Camus.

Tie said French writers and readers are familiar with Chinese classics, such as *The Analects* and *Dream of the Red Chamber*.

But she warned that contemporary writers risk succumbing to commercialization in today's publishing environment. She described writers as gardeners planting fake and showy flowers, which reflect their impatience, indifference and dishonesty in creation.



"We live in a commercialized world and everything seems like fast food. Due to the market's orientation, some writers don't care about the quality and duty of literature anymore," she said.

Both French and Chinese participants said literature is a mirror reflecting all corners of society.

"There is no difference between writing and experiencing life for writers. We cannot stop writing like that we cannot escape from the reality," said Paul de Sinety, director of the publication and written word department in French Institute.

Chinese writer Li Er, who has an abundant experience in international literature exchange, agreed, but pointed out that the situation for contemporary writers is more complicated.

"We have experienced three

major shifts in society in recent decades from the planned economy to market economy and now globalization. It is difficult for Chinese writers to express this 'changing experience,' which is rarely understood by the Western world," Li said.

He said that was why many Chinese writers pen epics instead of short stories. "Only long novels can reveal the complexity of our experience," he said.

But despite the popularity of French novels in China, translators struggle to introduce contemporary Chinese works into France.

Sylvie Gentil, the translator of Yan Lianke, Mian Mian and Liu Suola, said cultural misunderstandings do more to wreck a translation than any mistakes in grammar.

"A translator is thief," Gentil

said. "He or she steals words to bring readers to a foreign country in their native language."

When she select for works to introduce to France, she is careful to balance her own tastes with readers' general interest in Chinese contemporary literature.

"The French public would like to read about traditional China, best represented by works with rural themes by Mo Yan and Yan Lianke, and new perspectives represented by the works of younger writers born in the 1970s and 1980s," she said.

Initiated by late president of the French National Library Jean-Pierre Angremy, this regular seminar first took place in November 2009 in Paris. This second event was organized by the French Embassy, the Chinese Writers' Association and the French Institute of Culture.

South African Nobel laureate tracks her time

By Charles Zhu

Nadine Gordimer, one of the most prominent writers in South Africa, has collected her essays written between 1954 and 2008 in *Telling Times*. The compilation offers a rare glimpse into the life and thoughts of a Nobel laureate.

In 1954's "A South African Childhood," Gordimer recalls the gold-mining town in Transvaal east of Johannesburg where she was born in 1923. The town was host to scattered piles of coal dust. "They had caught fire at some time or other in their years of disuse, and had continued to burn, night and day, ever since," she writes. This vision of a burning countryside symbolizes the hidden fury and violence of South Africa under apartheid, opposition to which was the major theme of Gordimer's "writing and living."

At the end of her memoir, she refers to the question of race in South Africa: "In a country where people of a color different from your own are neither in the majority nor the ruling class, you may avoid altogether certain complications that might

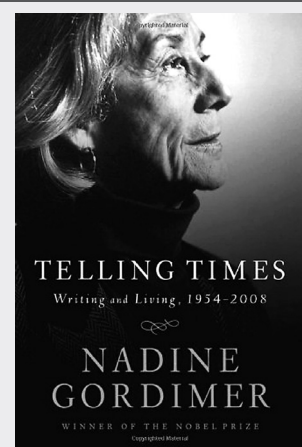
otherwise arise in the formation of your sense of human values."

She rarely writes about her personal life, and manages even fewer words about Reinhold Cassirer, her husband of almost 50 years who died in 2001. She writes that the best moment of her life was not when she won the Nobel Prize, but a party in the 1950s, soon after she and Cassirer married.

In "Party of One" she discusses a great number of American writers, speaking highly of the "truculent and unsqueamish honesty" of Saul Bellow, Vladimir Nabokov and Joseph Heller while dismissing the Beats and the existentialist Norman Mailer.

She is not a feminist and yet admires Simone de Beauvoir. She dismisses Olive Schreiner for her feminism though she has a high opinion of her 1883 novel *The Story of an African Farm* and laments that the writer allowed "her creative imagination to disappear in the sands of liberal pamphleteering."

But more interesting is the calm with which she describes



Telling Times
By Nadine Gordimer,
752pp, W. W. Norton &
Company, \$39.95

the estrangement between the privileged and black Africans like an outsider. She struggle to reconcile duty with happiness, writing "There are two absolutes in my life. One is that racism is evil – human damnation in the Old Testament sense – and no compromises, as well as sacrifices, should be too great in the fight against it. The other is that a writer is a being in whose sensibility is fused ... the duality of inwardness and outside world,

and he must never be asked to sunder this union."

As a white intellectual, Gordimer found it difficult to forge a union with black writers and activists. As the daughter of Jewish immigrants, she never integrated with either the Afrikaners or the British, and yet avoided the worst of apartheid.

She talks about the obstacles that made it hard for whites "to participate in the legal and economic and spiritual liberation of blacks." In a 1977 essay, she writes, "The thing is those whites failed: failure in the ranks of those who have power is not forgiven by those without power." In the last essay in the collection Gordimer writes, "Young black readers ... confine themselves to reading African and African-American writers," and warning that "rightful pride in African literature should not create a literary ghetto."

Some of Gordimer's books remain banned at home despite wide acclaim in Britain and the US. "I am one who has always believed and still believes we shall not be rid of censorship until we are rid of apartheid."

Timezone 8 book listing

Timezone 8 is a Hong Kong-based publisher, distributor and retailer of books on contemporary art, architecture, photography and design. This week, it recommends three new titles to *Beijing Today* readers.



Aram Tanis
Blowing Smoke and Seahorses

Aram Tanis: Blowing Smoke and Seahorses

By Patty Snijders and Siobhan Tattan, 104pp, Timezone 8, \$30

Dutch photographer Aram Tanis spent six months in Beijing to unearth the alienation of city life seen in this black and white collection.



Miao Xiaochun: Macromania

By Miao Xiaochun, 164pp, Timezone 8, \$25

Redolent of Baroque paintings populated with choirs of cherubim and angels, the photographic world of Miao Xiaochun is one generated on a computer. His vast cityscapes confront the viewer with a smooth, perfect world of riddles and wonders. This survey offers 158 reproductions of the artist's most representative works.



Hung Liu: Great Granary

Edited by Wu Hung, 220pp, Timezone 8, \$50

This is the story of one of China's pioneering women artists. Her groundbreaking 1981 mural "Music of the Great Earth" at the Central Academy of Fine Art has been revered by a generation of artists, including Xu Bing, Sui Jianguo, Liu Xiaodong, Yu Hong, Wei Lin and Li Songsong, all of whom contribute to this monograph.

(By He Jianwei)

Tablet fashion



By Wang Yu

The iPad seems to have become the ultimate all-weather fashion accessory in the last year. It's no surprise that fashionistas are looking for ways to extend their obsession to its software.

Fashion brands, online stores and magazines have been flocking to Apple's App Store to tap this new market. But it's hard to say whether their early attempts at fashion-friendly software will really win their target audience.

These new promotional products offer a glimpse into how the fashion industry is trying to enter the digital world.

A fashion editor who does not want her name published told a story of how the Chinese magazine she worked at rushed to assemble an Apple App to compete with its rival magazines.

When the development was done, all the employees were asked to invite 10 of their friends to download and criticize the App in Apple's online store. Many of the magazine's editors complained they felt like their print edition had been usurped.

"We don't know how much an iPad version will really help the magazine. iPad is fashionable, but will Chinese users want to use it to read about fashion? I think iPad Apps will in the end turn out to be solely for promotion," the editor says.

Though most of the big names in fashion have released digital versions for \$3, the Chinese editions are not brave enough to charge their users. Chinese readers are still learning to be paying digital consumers, so most are content to download free magazines that are two months out of date.

Brand Apps, however, have a much different role. Most appear designed to use Apple's devices to retain fan loyalty.

Sara Liu works in an

overseas company's Beijing branch. Like other young women who earn a good salary, one of Liu's biggest hobbies is shopping for luxury products. Her iPhone is a collection of fashion Apps by top brands and dealers such as Net-a-Porter and Shop Style.

Liu's favorite is Gucci's App, which she installed on both her iPhone and iPad. As the first luxury brand to release an application, Gucci set the standard. The program combines the brand's latest look book, product list, news and video clips of its fashion shows.

Usually brand-issued Apps are free. They are not built for buyers, as few of them support online shopping. Most are intended to cultivate potential consumers by recounting the brand's history and demonstrating its style.

"My friends and I like these applications because we can get the latest news about these brands and catch up with their new projects. I think most fans like us never actually shop on the official website. We go to second-hand stores and overseas deal-

ers," Liu says.

Twiggy Song, web editor of *Cosmopolitan's* Chinese edition, says the Apps are just for the fans. Her iPhone is decked out with the Apps from top luxury brands and high-street fashion icons like H&M and TopShop.

"I think a fashion App will win a young woman's heart by being practical. TopShop and The Gap's applications have sections with advice on how to improve your look. Most of it is universally useful. Too many brand Apps are just light versions of their website offerings," Song says.



Chanel

Chanel's App has a very simple interface, but that is enough for users explore the company's offerings. The master app database contains a variety of photos and videos that are regularly updated for fans.

Users can view the photos through a series of frames. They can also use the search tool to quickly locate specialty products.

Tod's

Tod's App is simple but interesting. Called "My Life in this Bag," the program helps users to discover its D-Bag collection by following the lives of a mother, a social queen, a traveler and an art agent. Users can see their location, what's in their bags and the kind of lives these D-Bag users lead.

YOOX

Yoox.com was the first online dealer to issue an App last April. Users can browse the latest products – from fashion to antiques and furniture – on mobile device like they are reading a magazine. All the pictures of the products are shown in high resolution. Buyers can order through the App and have their purchase delivered to any of 67 countries, China included.

Net-a-Porter

What makes Net-a-Porter's App valuable is that it is not a simple copy of its website. The designers make full use of iPhone and iPad's ability to create an interactive magazine. After watching fashion videos, users can also check out the latest and view them from different angles. The only problem is that some pictures have a low resolution.

Style Studio: Fashion Designer

Unlike the other Apps, this one is more like a game that allows users to create their own look. With a very nice user interface, Style Studio makes creating your own designs quick and simple.

Each design can be shared on Facebook or Twitter or saved to the "Style Studio closet." The lead feature is the "Dress Up" menu option which allows users to try their designs out on a model and add accessories such as shoes, sunglasses and jewelry.

The App collection Gucci

Besides regular website features such as its store locator, look book, news and events, Gucci's App has exclusive content like

the Gucci Ronson, a limited edition sneaker designed by Mark Ronson. Buyers can offer the shoes to users in China through this built-in purchasing tool.

Ronson and Gucci's creative director Frida Giannini added a special music section that offers three hours of streaming music and custom playlists. But the biggest surprise of the App is Gucci Beats, a feature that lets users combine loops, beats, drums and vocals to create their own music mix.



Handmade jewelry store now open in Sanlitun

By Annie Wei

Sanlitun has collected quite a few designer brands for jewelry. Elizabeth Genetti, a young woman from California, just moved her store from Gaobeidian to this booming area.

The designer said jewelry is an art form, which has the power to influence moods and evoke reactions. "Jewelry should make you feel beautiful," Genetti said. She wants to use her jewelry to inspire positive feelings.

Genetti's interest in jewelry began when she was 4, and her love and knowledge for it grew along with her family's jewelry factory that specialized in homemade gold designs. Genetti developed a deep appreciation for handcrafted jewelry.

"The handmade quality adds value, as each piece is truly unique," she said.

Genetti talked to *Beijing Today* about her designs.



Carmen, an intricate fusion of 18-karat vermeil hand-banded cuff, 2,690 yuan

Each gold twig is banded by hand. "I liked connecting each small strip to something bigger and beautiful. Webs of individual pieces come together to create the cuff, and rhodium added to the bezels makes the stones pop," said the designer.

Dops, candy-colored drop earrings, 345 yuan

These earrings use gemstones from all over the world. Each measures 3 millimeters and adds a color and sparkle suitable for everyday style.



Green onyx bangle and hexagonal vermeil cocktail ring with green onyx cabochon, 1,895 yuan

The designer said green is the color of balance, change and growth.

Pacific waves, 340 to 565 yuan

These sleek and stylish earrings were inspired by sunshine reflected off California waves. They are made of 18-karat vermeil and silver. Finishes are available in matte, high polish and scratched.



Vermeil well-cut cocktail rings in carnelian and gold rutilated quartz gemstones, 915 yuan

The ring design is simple and bold, suitable for wearing during the day and night.



Designer Elizabeth Genetti

Photos provided by Belita Jewelry

Vermeil trio charm bracelet with seed, golden rutilated quartz and tourmaline, 1,845 yuan



Sparkle bracelet, 1,150 to 1,240 yuan

This bracelet of sterling silver is inspired by starry nights. All stardust beads are added by hand to an interwoven chain. A toggle clasp makes the size easily adjustable. Available in silver, rhodium and 18-karat gold finish.



Belita Jewelry

Where: Floor 1, Eric Paris salon, Nan 43, Sanlitun Bei Jie, Chaoyang District

Open: Sunday to Wednesday 10 am – 7 pm, Thursday to Saturday 10 am – 9 pm

Tel: 1571128542

An ornate hand-carved bangle, 5,975 yuan

The only Hungarian food and wine restaurant in town



Inside Budapest at Gongti East Road

Photos provided by Budapest

By Annie Wei

Hungarian cuisine remains largely unknown in Beijing's burgeoning international dining scene. The opening of Budapest at Gongti East Road fills this void.

Hungarian cuisine is different from any other in Europe because it utilizes a much stronger flavor and is spicier. We recommend its Gulyasleves (49 yuan), a classical Hungarian beef soup with onions, potatoes, carrots, tomatoes and paprika seasoning imported from Hungary. The cumin gives the soup a stronger scent and tender-

izes the beef.

Fish soup (60 yuan) is another spicy signature dish. The key is finding a good river fish, which is harder to do during the winter.

We also like its bacon rolled chicken breast (69 yuan), served with mashed potatoes. The marinated chicken breast is rolled in ham and cheese, surrounded by bacon and deep-fried. For whatever reason, women diners especially like this dish.

Other traditional Hungarian dishes include chicken paprikash (59 yuan), fried chicken legs with

stewed onions, tomatoes and green peppers, and Alfoldi-style pork (59 yuan) with garlic.

We also recommend the Budapest steak (139 yuan for 220 grams), a juicy loin of beef with Hungarian peas and goose liver served with potato dumplings. The secret lies in the sauce, which is sumptuous.

For dessert, the specialty is sponge cake (39 yuan), which tastes a little like Tiramisu but is made of layered chocolate and vanilla sponge cake with vanilla custard, raisins, walnuts and chocolate sauce, and topped with cream.

Vegetarian diners will find selections that fit their needs as well, such as breaded cheese with jasmine rice and garnished with sauce tartar (49 yuan).

What we like the most about the restaurant is its Hungarian wine, priced reasonably. A bottle of Bull's Blood or Teleki Cabernet Sauvignon from famous Hungary vineyards starts at 150 yuan. Selective wine-lovers can try more expensive Hungarian wines starting at 380 yuan per bottle.

Hungary's special wine is Tokaji, a sweet wine with a long

history; it pairs with the dessert beautifully. A bottle of Tokaji Aszu costs 290 yuan.

The restaurant carries a business lunch special (49 yuan per person) and afternoon tea set (39 yuan per person). Those seeking a comfortable place to work can take advantage of the restaurant's Wi-Fi over coffee.

Budapest

Where: Room 202, 6 China View Branch, 2 Gongti Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am - 11 pm
Tel: 8587 1371



Gulyasleves, 49 yuan



Stewed pork, 45 yuan



Fish soup, 60 yuan

New wave of Greek wine arrives

By Wang Yu

Red wine originated in Greece, but its reputation was built in France, Italy and Spain. Greek wines are rarely exported.

But Boutari - one of Greece's most reputable wine brands - is an exception. A family-owned business founded 130 years ago and now operated by fifth-generation Boutaris, it currently has seven boutique wineries and makes more than 18 million bottles a year. It is the leader in the Greek market, with 15 percent market share, and 40 percent of its total production is exported to more than 45 countries.

It now counts China as an export destination.

Last month, Boutari held a dinner party along with its agent, Beijing Longevity International Trading Corporation, at Crown Plaza Hotel to introduce its wine to the local market.

Boutari wine is the 12-time winner of Wine and Spirits Magazine's "International Winery of the Year Award."

Skalani, one of the top-ranking Boutari wines, is very deep with an intense bouquet, dominated by aromas of red forest fruit and sweet aging aromas like cinnamon, clover and cocoa, matched harmoniously with the aromas of oak barrels and roasted nuts.

Ode is another highlight for dinner parties. Originating from Korinth, this wine has a velvet color and aromas of red fruit, plum and blackberry, suitable for those with a mild palate.

Boutari has also introduced its "Boutari Experimental Wines." Among them is the Agiorgitiko Boutari, a deep red and richly aromatic wine of plum with notes of vanilla and cocoa.

The wines will soon be available at supermarkets like BHG or Jenny Lou's. Anyone interested can contact the distributor Beijing Longevity International Trading Corporation at 6598 0993.

Photos provided by Boutari



Best served with red meat, pasta and cheddar

Perfect with red meat and sweet vegetables

Ideal accompaniment for light pasta dishes



Best served at 16 to 18 C with red meat

Best served with red meat and spicy cheeses

Best with red meat with sweet sauces

Connecting with tradition one touch at a time

By He Jianwei

For contemporary artists who have studied Western oil painting, the question of how to incorporate ancient Chinese ink and wash tradition into their works is a constant concern.

Some try to integrate ink and wash with Western painting methods. The late artist Wu Guanzhong was one of the most accomplished in doing this. He implied in his creation of contemporary ink and wash that artists must break away from traditional brushwork and ink-applying techniques and create new styles.

Following Wu's lead, Tianjin artist Zhang Yu, regarded as a pioneer in experimental ink and wash paintings since the late 1980s, is breaking rules in the extreme.

In his Fingerprint series from 1991, he abandoned conventional painting techniques and used his right index finger to apply ink, oil, nail polish, mineral water and tea to paper and silk.

He is pointing out that ink and wash painting is more about culture and spirit than the application of paint.

Although some ancient artists also used their fingers



Photo provided by Today Art Museum

to paint, such as Zhang Zao in Tang Dynasty (618-907) and Wu Wei in Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Zhang Yu paints neither landscapes nor portraits: he paints dots.

He treats fingerprints as incomplete and fragmented records of daily meditation. He does not attempt to involve the viewer in the work, nor offers clues to his works' meaning. He prefers that viewers simply imag-

ine the moment when each finger touched the paper.

"It is a record revealing the artist's conversation with himself," said Feng Boyi, curator of the exhibition "Self-Cultivation."

"The fingerprints reflect the infinite repetitions of ideas and it becomes a routine in his life, which is like cultivating himself according to a religious doctrine," Feng said.

This is the first time Zhang's

Fingerprints series will be displayed in Beijing.

Self-cultivation – Solo Exhibition of Zhang Yu

Where: Today Art Museum, Building 4, Pingod Community, 32 Baizhuan Lu, Chaoyang District

When: February 20-28, daily except Monday, 10 am – 5 pm

Admission: 20 yuan, 10 yuan for students

Tel: 5876 9804

5 Friday, February 18

Exhibition Song for Sale

This exhibition includes three large-scale paintings by

Robert Rauschenberg, David Salle and Michael Bevilacqua, celebrating the epic works of the New York School and pop era painters that reflect the scale of the American landscape and sweep of the American vision.

Where: Faurschou Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 6, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 8459 9316

Movie

Little Nicholas (2009)

To mark the 50th anniversary of the French children's book, the movie recreates the prim, decorous world of suburban France in the postwar years portrayed in the book.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: 20 yuan
Tel: 8601 6860

Nightlife

The Big Picture

Founded by Swedish musician Mikael Salomons-son, this indie band performs songs from its latest album, *Handwaving*.

Where: Hot Cat Club, 46 Fangjia Hutong, Andingmen Nei Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6400 7868



The Big Picture

6 Saturday, February 19

Exhibition Kristina Heckova Solo Exhibition

Slovakian artist Heckova

was the winner of the 2010 International Drawing Fair Prize, which featured works by the best 160 young artists attending courses in the top 16 European art schools.

Where: Hadrien de Montferrand Gallery, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 13, daily except Monday, 11 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free
Tel: 13911651353

Movie

Tangle (2010)

This is a story about the conflict between human nature and power, revealing the lies told by an ordinary Chinese family to hide their true feelings, the absurd reality of an individual's

existence and the social reality of the abuse of power in China.

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 4 pm
Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students

Tel: 8459 9269

Nightlife Rebuilding the Rights of Statues

Influenced by the 1970s and 1980s sounds of Bauhaus, Gang of Four and Joy Division, this local post-punk band performs frequently at Western music festivals, such as New York's CMJ Music Marathon.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm
Admission: 60 yuan advance purchase, 80 yuan at the door
Tel: 6404 2711

Sunday, February 20

Exhibition Paint the Mountain – Lao Zhu's 22-Year Project

Lao Zhu discusses the relationship between nature and art.

Where: Space Zero, Red Stone Square, Daku Art Center, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 31, daily except Monday, 10:30 am

– 5:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9121

Nightlife

Sahara Trio

Founded in early 2010, the Sahara Trio is a combination of flute, viola and cello that explores a repertoire composed for their instrument combination.

Where: Capital M, 3/F, 2 Qianmen Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 4 pm

Admission: 65 yuan, 10 yuan for students, including a drink

Tel: 6702 2727

Movie

Trouble Makers (2006)

Based on Que Diwei's novella, *Village Operation*, this black comedy tells the story of four men living in Black Well Village in Yunnan Province who finally decide to run the criminal Xiong brothers out of their home.

Where: Broadway Cinema-

theque, 2/F Building 4, north section of Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8008



Upcoming

Nightlife

Singers & Songwriters' Night
Two local singers and songwriters, Wanting Qu and Sean Z, present their pop songs.

Where: CD Blues Cafe & Bar, 16 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: February 22, 9 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6506 8288

Stage in March

Concert

Peter Vinograd Piano Recital

Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Bei Xinhua Jie, Xicheng District

When: March 4, 7:30 pm

Admission: 50-380 yuan

Tel: 5166 1145

Katie Targett-Adams & Irish Band Ciorras

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: March 18, 7:30 pm

Admission: 30-380 yuan

Tel: 6417 7845

Nikolaj Znaider and Staatskapelle Dresden

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: March 26-27, 7:30 pm

Admission: 200-980 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Dance

Raise the Red Lantern

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: March 13-14, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-500 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

The Accidental Death of An Anarchist

Where: Fengchao Theater, 200 meters east of Oriental Ginza, No. 12 Shizipo, Dongzhimen Wai Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: March 9-20, 7:30 pm

Admission: 50-200 yuan

Tel: 5165 1914

Much Ado About Nothing

Where: Nine Theater, Chaoyang Culture Center, 17 Jintai Li, Chaoyang District

When: March 25-26, 7:30 pm

Admission: 60-380 yuan

Tel: 6551 6930 / 6906

Goddess of Luo River

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: February 12-14, 7:30 pm

Admission: 80-380 yuan

Tel: 6551 8058

Opera

Kunqu: The Story of the Jade Hairpin

Where: Multi-functional Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: March 5, 7:30 pm

Admission: 150 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)

Overcoming the post-holiday blues

By Li Zhixin

For many busy office workers, Spring Festival is a much-needed opportunity to go shopping, traveling, dining and drinking with friends and family. But the days of excess and odd sleeping hours have made it difficult for many to return to the daily grind. Around the city people can

still be seen yawning, skipping meals, acting irritably and complaining of aches and pains.

Experts estimate that 35 percent of office workers between the ages of 25 and 40 will have to face the post-holiday blues when they return to work.

Reluctant return to work

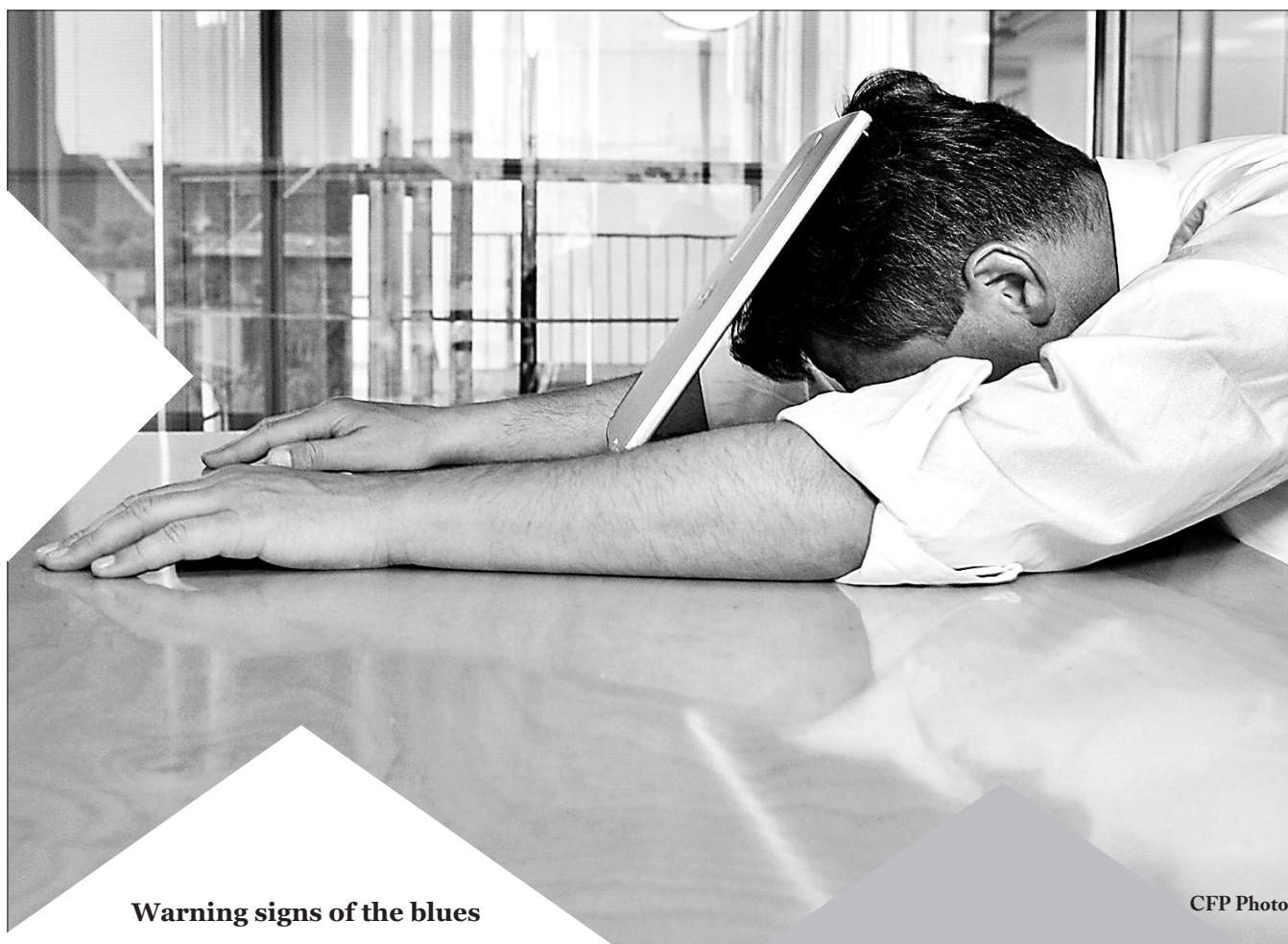
Luo Lei, 26, a web editor, didn't hop on a train to return to his hometown during Spring Festival: his seven-day holiday was spent alone in Beijing.

It was an easy break during which his days consisted of watching movies on DVD, playing video games and chatting with his friends online. But as the holiday neared an end, he became unusually irritable.

"I felt like the holiday just shot by. I wasn't ready to head back to the office, and thinking about work was disorienting," he said.

He went to the hospital to try and get a sick note so he could start later, but the doctors told him the cure for his post-holiday blues wasn't rest, but more work.

"Luo, like many other office workers, was accustomed to the 9-to-5 working lifestyle during normal times. Although it can be tiring, they can manage their life around this schedule. But after a week spent indoors, he got used to not moving. Being forced back into his normal stressful routine was causing him anxiety," said Ding Xiulan, a doctor at Emergency Department of Peking University People's Hospital.



CFP Photo

Warning signs of the blues

1. Fatigue

Weariness, dry eyes, headaches, backaches and lags in response time can affect workers for several days after the holiday.

"Office types usually spend long stretches of time sitting down. The lack of aerobic exercise leaves their bodies short on oxygen, so their muscles don't burn enough glucose. What they don't burn turns back into lactic acid and causes soreness," Ding said.

She also attributed fatigue to the modern diet which is rich in sugar and starch, substances which become glucose very rapidly after entering the body. "When blood sugar spikes and heads for your brain, the lactic acid that accumulates can leave you irritable with a headache and dry eyes," she said.

2. Anxiety disorder

Office workers may also feel scatterbrained and anxious, even suffering from insomnia, after a long holiday. While some people adapt back to a normal schedule very quickly, others struggle with the change. This transition may have more to do with an individual's diet than his temperament. "It is easy to suffer insomnia, anxiety and rage if you gorge on junk food at the office," she said.

Previous studies found that eating too many sugars and starches can make people irritable. Furthermore, a shortage of vitamins, especially vitamin C, can make a person fearful of social interaction and pressure. A shortage of calcium and magnesium can leave one feeling nervous.

3. Metabolic disorder

Continuous dinner parties during the holiday make people likely to overeat, causing indigestion, abdominal distension, diarrhea and constipation.

"If you eat high-fat and high-calorie foods, you may experience significant fluctuations in blood sugar," she said.

In addition, frequent consumption of alcohol during the festival can damage the liver, stomach, intestines and pancreas.

The related metabolic syndromes may further develop into diabetes, obesity, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, high blood sugar, fatty liver and alcohol liver disease.

4. Travel complications

Irregular diets during the holiday may upset the body's PH balance, leaving one susceptible to colds, fevers, corneal inflammation, toothaches, oral ulcers and other ailments after returning to work.

Tips to conquer your symptoms

- 1. Eat away your fatigue.** Eat foods containing tryptophan like bananas, poultry, dairy produce and peas. These will improve your mood and morale by boosting your serotonin neurotransmitters.
- 2. Keep active.** Exercise will give you the mood-boost you need and get you moving again. If you're living in a cold climate, there are plenty of winter exercise options such as walking, skiing and the gym. Those in hot climates should consider swimming, hiking or water sports.
- 3. Stay with other people.** Some of the post-holiday blues might be connected to a sense of loneliness due to spending the holiday alone. Cut back on your TV viewing or video game playing. Lift your spirits by staying out with friends and family or getting out and about to do whatever interests you.
- 4. Take a deep breath.** Seize the opportunity to re-examine your life and what you do after work.

If you feel tense, bored or anxious, sip on a cup of tea and take a time out to refresh yourself.

5. Think positively. Holidays offer a good chance to re-plan your career, renew your resolutions and set higher goals. The restful time after the holiday gives you a chance to try things different from your usual routine, and that break can be a chance for rejuvenation.

6. Go easy on your New Year's resolutions. If you set the bar too high and feel like you are already slipping, take a more realistic look at your resolutions and assess whether they need to be adjusted to be more achievable.

7. Take part in fun activities. Revive the holiday excitement by arranging fun things, such as having dinner with friends, taking a new class to cultivate a hobby or interest, attending a sporting event or seeing a movie. Choose activities that suit your budget and interests and that you know will give you a thrill.

Better late than never

Scenic spots beautified by snow

By Zhang Dongya

After more than 100 days without precipitation, Beijing saw its first snowfall last Wednesday and another one on Saturday. On Sunday, many people changed their schedules to visit parks and gardens to see Beijing in white.

According to local forecasts, Beijing is expected to see snowfall next week as well. *Beijing Today* recommends some ideal places to experience the snow, however belated.



Beihai Park, an exquisite imperial garden, is an ideal place to view snow scenery in Beijing.



Five Dragon Pavilions in Beihai



Many in Beijing say they love the city when it's shrouded in snow. "The entire city is pure white and gives off a sense of solemnity and serenity," said Sherry Wu, a Beijing resident.

This winter, snow came unexpectedly late, leading local newspapers to report the city's first flurries on the front page: Beijing sees snow!

Beihai, snow and lake

Beihai Park, an exquisite imperial garden, is one of the best places to view snow scenery in Beijing. As its name suggests – North Sea – there is a large body of water in the middle of the park – not a sea, alas, but a lake – that is beautiful during wintertime.

The park's north gate is an archway with delicate carvings. Inside is a bamboo forest and a path that winds around the lake. Since the bamboo forest is fenced off, the snow around the area is pristine, devoid of mud or footprints.

Nearby is a typical Chinese garden with a covered walkway, large area of rocks and stone bridges. There is also a glaze archway, imposing and magnificent.

From afar, old pine trees that have been around for hundreds of years look like they are carrying white blossoms due to the snow.

If you're careful, you'll notice several snow rabbits. One sits beside a stone arch bridge with long eyes made of tree branches. A smaller one stands under a tree with long ears of bamboo leaves. Another one sits on a tree trunk with red eyes made from kernels.

All around, rocks can be seen covered

with dense snow. For safety considerations, paths to the elevated pavilions are currently closed.

Many photography aficionados can be spotted taking pictures.

The lake at the center of the park is only partially frozen, but it is mostly white due to the snow. Baita – the White Pagoda – sits on Qiong Island in the middle of the lake and makes for a great photo opportunity if it's not too foggy.

Walking by the lakeside, you will see the iron shadow wall, which was built during Yuan Dynasty (1206-1368), with a thick snow cover.

The most attractive structure, though, is the Five Dragon Pavilions. Four of the pavilions were built with square tops, while a central pavilion has a round top. Zigzagging corridors connect the pavilions, looking like dragons playing in the water.

On the day we visited, one painter set up an easel facing the White Pagoda. The beautiful landscape in front of us was transferred onto the canvas, as magical as ever.

Beihai Park

Where: 1 Wenjin Jie, Xicheng District
Open: 8 am – 6 pm (January – March)

Tel: 6403 1102

Admission: 10 yuan

Getting there: Take Bus 107, 111, 118, 623, 701 to Beihai Bei Men stop to get to the north gate of Beihai Park, or take Bus 101, 103, 109, 614, 619, 685 to the Beihai



The best time to visit the Imperial Palace is in the winter, especially after snowfall. CFP Photo



The White Pagoda on Qiong Island in the middle of Beihai Park makes for a great photo opportunity if it's not too foggy. Photos by Mockingbird

stop for the south gate.

Shichahai, a playground with snow

Nearing Shichahai, you will first hear the sound of laughter. Houhai, the Back Sea, has turned into a snow playground on which you'll find snowmen and snowball fights.

Also available is ice skating and sledding.

"Sliding on the ice was popular when I was kid, but now I'm too timid to do it," a grown man said, with a laugh, as he fell down while skating.

Shichahai

Where: Houhai Scenic Area, Di'anmen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District

Open: All day

Tel: 6618 5806

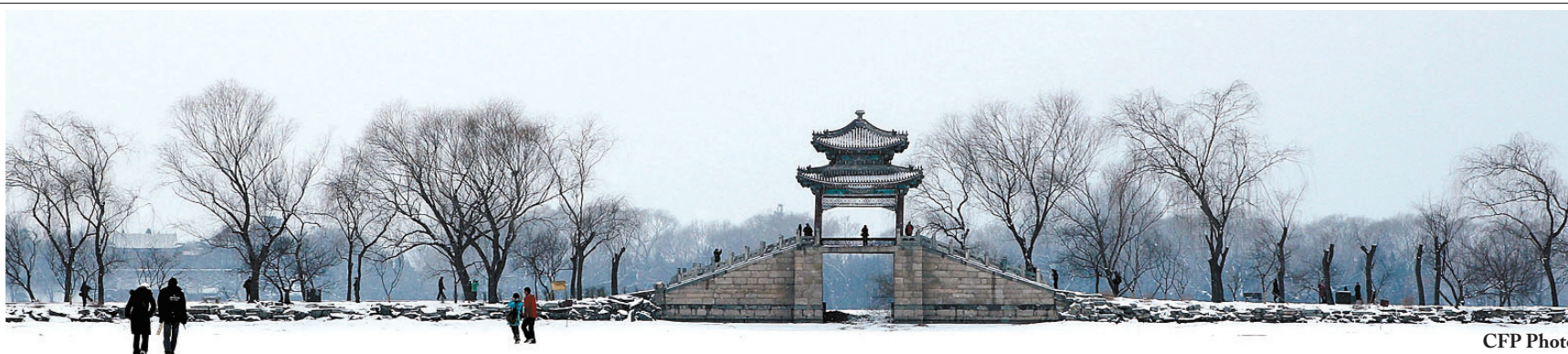
Admission: Free

Getting there: Take Bus 13, 42, 107, 111, 118, 204, 612, 701, 810 to Beihai Bei Men stop

Continued on page 21...

The snow-covered Imperial Palace appears greater solemnity in the winter. CFP Photo





CFP Photo

...continued from page 20

Jingshan Park, best to view snowy Forbidden city

By Chu Meng

Last Sunday, visitors to Jingshan park were lucky: they got a rare bird's-eye view of snow-covered Forbidden City.

Located east of Beihai Park and north of the Forbidden City on the 7.8-kilometer "Central Axis" that now extends north to the National Stadium (Bird's Nest), the park has always played an important role in the ancient city.

The north-to-south axis was laid out in 1403 during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). All the most important pieces of architecture in the city, including the Temple of Heaven, the Bell and Drum Towers and Qianmen Gate, are on the axis.

Covered with fruit trees, pines and cypresses, Jingshan – or "scenic hill" – was built from earth dug up to make a moat around the Forbidden City.

For that reason, the park was an imperial garden during the Yuan, Ming and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties.

Jingshan was part of the Forbidden City until the early 1900s, when walls were pulled down and a road was built through it. Several gates and buildings in the

area were destroyed.

For hundreds of years, however, Wanchun Pavilion, meaning "everlasting spring pavilion," was the city's highest point.

Standing on the 43-meter-tall pavilion, people are offered a wonderful view of Beijing's skyline. They can see landmarks along the Central Axis and outlines of the city's ring roads.

The park's other sites of interest include Xiwanglou, Hope Tower, where people worship at a memorial tablet for Confucius; and Yong'endian, Benevolence Hall, toward the south.

North of the hill, Guandedian, Visiting Virtue Hall, is where the coffins of some Qing emperors and empresses lie.

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the park has been renovated several times. It is now famous for its peony flowers from April to July.

Jingshan Park

Where: 1 Jingshanxi Jie, Xicheng District

Open: 6:30 am – 7 pm

Tel: 6404 4071

Admission: 2 yuan

Getting there: Take Bus 5 to Jingshanxijie stop for the west gate of Jingshan Park, or Bus 101, 103, 109, 812, 814 to the Forbidden City stop for the park's south gate.



A painter sets up an easel facing the White Pagoda to depict the snowy landscape.



Shichahai turns into a winter playground when snow falls.



The iron shadow wall in Beihai, which was built during the Yuan Dynasty, is coated with snow.

Photos by Mockingbird



Other destinations:

The Imperial Palace

The best time to visit the Imperial Palace is in the winter, especially on days when snow is on the ground. It's less crowded, and the snow will add a dash of solemnity to the ancient palace.

Where: 4 Jingshan Qian Jie, Dongcheng District

Open: 8:30 am – 3:40 pm (November – March)

Tel: 6513 2255

Admission: 40 yuan

Getting there: Take Subway Line 1 to Tian'anmen East Station or Tian'anmen West Station, or Bus 1, 2, 10, 20, 82 to Tian'anmen Dong stop.

Summer Palace

Despite the name, the Summer Palace is equally magnificent during the winter. Kunming Lake was built during Emperor Qianlong's reign (1736-95) to imitate a scenic spot on Hangzhou's famous West Lake. Xidi, or West Causeway, is a copy of Su Causeway in West Lake.

Where: 19 Xinjiangongmen Lu, Haidian District

Open: 7 am – 5 pm

Tel: 6288 1144

Admission: 20 yuan

Getting there: Take Subway Line 4 to Beigongmen Station or Bus 330, 331, 332, 346, 394, 690, 718 to Yiheyuan Beigongmen stop

Dining



More than a hotel

Signatures can identify individuals, but it's the dishes that identify a restaurant. Chef Shi's traditional chicken congee is drawing people in for dinner at Havana. Stop in for succulent prime rib roast from Australia at CBD International Cuisine, part of an extensive buffet served with aus jus and horseradish. The Chinese classic "Eight Jewel Duck" is available at Yao Chi Chinese Restaurant for lunch and dinner. The Grand Millennium is the city's only hotel serving American Chocolate Fudge Cake at the Lobby Lounge. Like a fine brandy or scotch, the cake should be enjoyed in moderation — if you can control yourself.

Where: Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 6530 9383

Horizon restaurant starts all-you-can-eat dim sum brunch

The dim sum served at The Horizon is a delight for guests dining on the weekend between 11 am and 2:30 pm.

Helmed by Chinese executive chef Stephen Lo, these steamed, fried and baked Cantonese delicacies are made with a master's touch. Guests will find them a hearty accompaniment to the restaurant's main dishes. Prices start from 108 yuan per

person 15 percent gratuity) excluding beverages.

Located at Shangri-La's Kerry Centre Hotel, the Horizon Chinese restaurant serves Cantonese cuisine as well as regional delights from Beijing and Sichuan.

The restaurant was named Editor's Pick in 2009 and 2010 by Modern Weekly.

Where: Shangri-La's Kerry Centre Hotel, Beijing, 1 Guanghai Lu, Chaoyang District

When: every Saturday and Sunday, 11 am — 2:30 pm

Tel: 8565 2188



Rediscover Yu

Yu welcomes you to an unforgettable gastronomic experience that mixes classic Cantonese cuisine with Chef Ku's new creations.

The delectable Chinese cuisine at Yu is as fine and sophisticated as its jade namesake. The restaurant has seven luxurious private chambers where a tea master's touch can turn the evening into a sumptuous gastronomic affair.

Where: Yu Restaurant, 2F, the Ritz-Carlton, Beijing, 83A Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 11:30 am — 2:30 pm, 6-10 pm

Restaurant capacity: 110 people, including seven private dining rooms

Tel: 5908 8111



Ladies First!

CBD celebrates International Women's Day on March 8 with a fabulous deal in honor of the fairer sex. Every table with at least four ladies dining will receive a 25 percent discount during our lunch and dinner buffets. Seats are limited so make your reservations now!

Where: Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6530 9383

Tourism

Mainland travelers top spenders in Greater China

Travelzoo Asia Pacific, a licensee of the global Internet media company Travelzoo, released its latest findings today. Among Greater China holidaymakers, 80 percent of those on the mainland intend to spend more on leisure travel this year.

The figures also show that 70 percent of those in Hong Kong and 65 percent in Taiwan planned the same.

Mainland Chinese respondents said they planned to spend \$3,780 per person on leisure travel this year, while Hong Kong and Taiwanese respondents said \$2,670 and \$1,782, respectively.

These findings were based on responses by 4,200 Travelzoo subscribers to a survey conducted between January 4 and 12.

Jason Yap, CEO, Travelzoo Asia Pacific, said the survey results provide useful insights into today's travel trends among the people of Greater China.

The results also show the increasingly sophisticated travel inclinations of the mainland Chinese. While sightseeing vacations consistently top all lists no matter what destination was chosen, eco-tourism vacations came in at a close second.

Some 46 percent of the mainland respondents said they wanted to pursue adventure more than wining, dining, dancing and shopping: 33 percent of the Taiwanese and 20 percent of Hong Kong responders shared this passion.

Airline

Jetstar Asia, Valuair codeshare with Qantas

Jetstar Asia (3K) and Valuair (VF) are starting a codeshare partnership with Qantas (QF) on major Asia Pacific routes, strengthening the Jetstar Group's fast-growing hub at Singapore Changi Airport.

Since 2004, Qantas has codeshared with Jetstar across most of its Australia, New Zealand and Asia Pacific services.

This arrangement, subject to final regulatory approval, will be expanded to include Jetstar operations from Singapore — Qantas' primary hub and Jetstar's major flying base in Asia.

QF flight numbers will initially be applied to 11 Asian destinations served from Singapore Changi International Airport by Jetstar Asia and Valuair, including Jetstar Asia's daily Singapore-Auckland A330 service, set to commence from March 17.



Rasa Sentosa Resort, Singapore now under Shangri-La

Rasa Sentosa Resort, Singapore has been re-branded as Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort, Singapore after a complete SG \$80 million (412 million yuan) makeover. The resort re-opened on January 19 at 8:18 am — an auspicious hour — in time for the Lunar New Year.

As the only resort in Singapore with a beachfront location, Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort, Singapore offers services and facilities catering to leisure and business travelers.

Rooms feature views of the hill, garden, pool or sea, with a balcony in each room for guests to enjoy lush natural surroundings. The number of rooms has been reduced from 459 to 454 rooms and range in size

from 31 square meters for a deluxe room to 150 square meters for the Sentosa suite. Guests with children can check into a larger Family Room instead of having two connecting rooms. Honeymooners can choose to stay in the Panorama Room with an open concept bathroom that looks out to views of the South China Sea or a Deluxe Sea-View Suite, each with its own private outdoor Jacuzzi.

The rooms are furnished in soothing accents of green and beige to complement the resort's lush and natural environment with wood the predominant material. Displayed prominently above the head of the beds are floral carvings and leaf motifs.

(By Jackie Zhang)

Hotel

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

Canary in a cage or coal mine?

By Annie Wei

The other day I was at the bar Xiu with my friends Jack and Larz.

"Hey, there is a very beautiful woman looking at us," Larz said to Jack. "She even pointed us to her friend."

I took a look. "Boys, she is not looking at you two," I informed them. "She was pointing at me, telling her friend that I was a bitch."

Jack and Larz looked confused.

I explained that the beautiful woman was Ally Chou, 27, one of my former roommates and enemies.

Three years ago, Chou moved into my apartment. When I interviewed her as a potential roommate, she struck me as a normal person, a graduate of People's University's economics department and worker at a financial company.

Six months later, I realized she had lied in her interview: she did not graduate from People's University, it was apparent, because her English was horrible. She also proved to be a lousy roommate, always late with rent and constantly inviting friends over late at night for loud chat sessions.

Our situation grew desperate when she was laid off. Eventually, she began promoting parties at a Sanlitun nightclub, which meant even more late-night carousing.

"She was so cool. She said she made 5,000 yuan at least for hosting a party," Elaine, one of her friends who frequently dropped by our apartment, told me.

Funny, because I happened to overhear that she only made 300 yuan and still owed the DJ money.

The hosting thing lasted only two or three Saturdays because she complained it interfered with her own partying time.

My last straw was her so-called "young and successful" boyfriend, who came every day after work and left at 9 the next morning. I got mad because I never agreed to allow another roommate, to say nothing of one who walked around naked with a pale and lame body.



Ally and I had a big fight and said a lot of mean things to each other.

When I recalled the fight details to Jack and Larz, they couldn't help laughing out loud, especially when Chou said I was bullying her because I was such an old woman who was jealous of her youth, her beauty and her having a man.

"How did you fight back?" Larz asked.

"I said, 'So what? I just don't want you to live in my apartment like a canary in a coal mine,'" I said. "And

move out of my apartment ASAP."

"What do you mean, exactly?" the boys look puzzled.

"There is a Chinese saying, 'canary in a cage,' meaning a beautiful woman who cannot make a living but depends on her man."

"But canary in a coal mine does not mean that," Larz said. "It means a signal." He explained that long ago, miners took a canary into coal mines to detect leaking gas.

"Oh," I said. "Next time I'll just say 'whore,' then."

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week

1. One tendency we need to pay attention is this obsession with commercialization.

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): We know there is the English phrase "pay attention to." When the phrase is used as an attributive, don't forget the "to," which is absolutely necessary. So, the correct sentence would be: One tendency we need to pay attention to is this obsession with commercialization. I will give you another example: The children I am taking care of will go to a summer camp tomorrow.

Terry Boyd-Zhang (TBZ): Oh, the English prepositions! They are so difficult to learn and so important to include. In speech, they are often glossed over, but in writing they make all the difference between proper English and Chinglish.

2. Home buyers are lining up to pursuit an apartment.

ZS: Don't confuse nouns with verbs. The writer here has confused "pursue" with "pursuit." It should be: Home buyers are lining up to pursue an apartment. Similarly, you would not say: We are going to conference with the farmers. Rather, it should be: We are going to confer with the farmers.

TBZ: English has many words where the nouns are very similar to corresponding verbs. This probably comes from the history of the language, like a "chicken and egg" situation. For example: Would "the official" come first? Or would "his or her officiating" create the noun? Then, where does one's "officious behavior" come in?

3. As the birthplace of fireworks, Chinese people have been celebrating with decorative explosives since the Song Dynasty.

ZS: I once put this sentence to one of my students and he could not make out where is the error. It is logic that matters. "Chinese people" is not on par with "birthplace." People are fairly liable to overlook such logic, though it is, as a matter of fact, very important. Let us change it and make it a perfect sentence: The people of China, the birthplace of fireworks, have been celebrating with decorative explosives since the Song Dynasty.

TBZ: I'm not sure how to teach logic. "Logic" appears as a big philosophical word that causes all but the keenest student's eyes to glaze over with incomprehension. Let's use another word like "common sense." Also, in fact, I would make the sentence a bit clearer by changing the clause or pulling out that clause. Instead: As China is the birthplace of fireworks, people have been celebrating ... Or, China is the birthplace of fireworks and people have been celebrating ... Then they go back to work and look forward to the May holiday!

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

Insert to Gain Power

By Terry Boyd-Zhang

Wouldn't it be great if life were that easy? Insert something – your finger, your hand, your ... – and all of a sudden you would be filled with strength! Like Clark Kent ducking into a conveniently-located phone booth, or Peter Parker slipping into his red Spidey suit.

"Gaining power" doesn't happen so much in real life, though, does it?

In real life, we tend to "gain weight" more than anything, especially over Spring Festival. (Don't believe it? Check out my husband's recent Weibo photo ...) We can "gain time" but usually we lose it. As we get older, we hopefully "gain



an understanding," but this isn't guaranteed. Sometimes our ideas "gain a foothold" and our team "gains a victory," but usually, or at least it seems to me, it's all

"pain and no gain."

Occasionally, we "gain a rank" and then take two steps back again. Every once in a while we "gain control," but is that equal to gaining power or is it something different? Often, even the power to explain to our boss or our teacher or our parent is beyond our control. Every now and then, the best thing to do is to get away. And when you insert (first character – *cha*) your hotel room card (second character – *ka*) into the slot in order to turn on the electricity (*qudian*) before you vegetate in front of the TV, you can insert yourself under the covers and gain power to continue on for another day.

The Tourist (2010)

Movie of the week

Most people heading to see this movie will be fans of Johnny Depp or Angelina Jolie, its leading actors and two of Hollywood's sexiest. Even though there is no spark between the two, the lineup appears to have been a success.

Director Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck is famous too for his award-winning movie *Das Leben der Anderen*. But this time, his reputation is overshadowed by Depp and Jolie's amazing performances.

Synopsis

A chance meeting on the Eurostar between American tourist Frank and a mysterious beautiful British woman Elise drags him into a dangerous world of intrigue and espionage. Frank soon finds himself fleeing from gunfire on the historic streets of Paris and the winding canals of Venice. As Frank and Elise run, their love blossoms.



Scene 1

(Elise meets Frank on the train while he is smoking an electric cigarette.)

Frank (F): I'm sorry.

Elise (E): What for?

F: Do you mind me smoking? It's not a real cigarette.

E: What?

F: It's electronic. It delivers the same amount



of nicotine, but the smoke is water vapor. Yeah, watch! LED light.

E: That's somewhat disappointing.

F: Would you rather have me smoking for real?

E: No, I would rather you be a man who did exactly as he pleased. I'm Elise.

F: I'm Frank.

E: That's a terrible name.

F: Yeah, that's the only one I've got. What brings you to Venice?

E: You read spy novels. I am a mysterious woman on a train. You tell me what my story is.

F: OK ... I think you would be a diplomat attache? Or maybe a girl from East Germany whose father's been kidnapped and they're **blackmailing (1)** you into stealing something for them. Probably microfilm, there's usually microfilm involved.

E: What awaits me?

F: Trouble, certainly.

E: Danger?

F: Oh, yeah. You'll most likely be shot at in less than two chapters!

E: Is there a man in my life?

F: Have to wait and see.

E: Invite me to dinner Frank.

F: What ... Would you like to have the dinner?

E: Women don't like questions.

F: Join me for dinner.

E: Too demanding.

F: Join me for dinner?

E: Another question.

F: I'm having dinner ... if you'd care to join me.



Scene 2

(Both the police and the gangsters mistake Frank for Alexander Pierce, a man who stole from the gangster Shaw. Elise saves Frank from their first attempt to catch him.)

F: Huh, so that's how you **pick a lock (2)**.

How do you know how to do that? Where's the owner of this boat? Bottom of a canal?

E: Sitting at a cafe with a pocketful of Euros.

F: Why is this happening? Why is everyone trying to kill me?

E: Because I kissed you.

F: Do I look that much like him?

E: I am sorry I got you involved in all this.

F: Why are you involved in all this?

E: Because I'm in love with him.

F: Really? I'm not. Seriously, help me understand why?

E: I honestly didn't think he would let it go this far. I didn't think he would let Shaw get to you.



F: Shaw ... That's the man who Pierce stole from?

E: Reginald Shaw. Alexander used to be his private banker.

F: I thought he was Russian or something like that.

E: He surrounds himself with the Russians, but he's as English as Alex and I. Give me your hand. Now he owns most of the casinos and brothels from here to Novus Brusk. Once, he bragged to Alexander that he had every man killed that his wife had slept with before she met him. And when he found out how many there had been ... He killed her too. There you are.

F: What made Pierce think he could take on a guy like that?

E: It's just who he is.

F: Could you ever feel like that about someone like me? I don't regret it, you know. Kissing you.

E: I have to go check the, umm ... the thing ...

Scene 3

(Shaw finds Elise and forces her to hand over the money. The police are watching from outside when Frank breaks in, claiming to be the real Pierce.)

F: You let her leave and I'll open the safe.

E: Frank, what in hell?

F: Please Elise, let me handle this.

I'll say it again, let her go and I'll open the safe.

Shaw (S): Who the hell are you?

F: I'm Alexander Pierce.

E: He is not Alexander Pierce.

F: Elise, please.

S: Alexander, is it you? Truly?

F: Truly.

S: Show me your teeth. Alexander had crooked teeth stained from excessive smoking.

F: Braces. Electronic cigarettes.

S: He had a higher forehead.

F: I had a migraine for two weeks after the **remodel (3)**.

S: You sound different.

F: Voice chip implant.

S: No, no, I mean the way you speak.

E: Yes, that's right, Alexander was English. This man is American.

F: I've actually gotten so used to the American accent that I find it a **tad (4)** difficult to go back.

E: That's pathetic. This man is not Alexander Pierce. He's a tourist!

S: A tourist?

E: Someone I happened to sit next to on the train.

F: How would a tourist know that you killed every man your wife ever slept with?

E: I told him that.

S: You told a tourist?

F: Why would she do that? It's absurd.

S: Well, there's a simple way of finding out. Open the safe.

F: I've made you a deal when she's gone and I know she's safe then ...

S: Well ... I'll make you an even better deal: Open the safe now or I won't make you watch something that you would never forget. Open it!

F: I see.



Vocabulary

1. blackmail: to ask for something by threatening to expose or do something

2. pick a lock: to open a lock

3. remodel: here it refers to plastic surgery

4. a tad: a little

(By Wang Yu)